

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. **ILLUSTRATED.**

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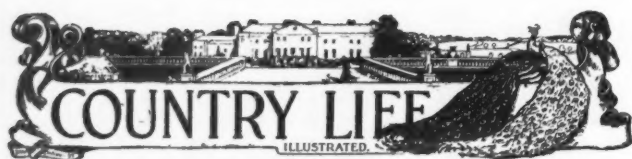
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Photo. J. THOMSON.

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The Editor will be glad to receive for consideration photographs, instantaneous or otherwise, besides literary contributions, in the shape of articles and descriptions, as well as short stories, sporting or otherwise, not exceeding 2,000 words. Contributors are specially requested to place their names and addresses on their MSS. and on the backs of photographs. The Editor will not be responsible for the return of artistic or literary contributions which he may not be able to use, and the receipt of a proof must not be taken as evidence that an article is accepted. Publication in COUNTRY LIFE alone will be recognised as acceptance. Where stamps are enclosed, the Editor will do his best to return those contributions which he does not require.

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On account of the regulations of the Postal Authorities, the index to Vol. IV. of COUNTRY LIFE is not included in the body of the paper, but it will be forwarded free to subscribers by the Manager upon the receipt of a stamped and addressed wrapper.

THE MILK TEST FOR TUBERCULOSIS.

THERE is not the slightest question but that tuberculosis is in the air. Unfortunately this is no less true in the literal than in the metaphorical sense. The subject of tuberculosis, and its infection, by means of the affected milk of cows, into the human system, is engrossing a body of opinion that continually grows; and at the same time it is to be feared that the number of infected cows and the consequent danger to the human race is on the increase too. A few years ago the notion that any human being could be in serious danger of tubercle on the lung in consequence of the quality of the cow's milk that he drank, would have been laughed at in that spirit of what the Briton is apt to call his sturdy common-sense, which has made him ubiquitously just the "particular derved fool" and extraordinarily successful person that he is. It is one of his qualities to disbelieve everything that is not made patent to his senses, and it is only by the hammering into his hard head of perpetual sermons by Koch and the like eminent men that he is at length being brought to perceive—as continual dropping will wear away even a stone, and so possibly the prejudice and obstinacy of a British brain—that he is living in the midst of

peril which it is possible, by precautions, to minimise. It is a very considerable peril. Seventy thousand of our people in England, it is computed, are the annual victims of consumption. Consumption is a disease that is attended by very painful circumstances, and one that transmits itself in a geometrical progression to the third and fourth generation. It is not necessary to enlarge on its horrors. Neither is it necessary to say that not all, but only a small proportion, of these 70,000 are victims of the infection carried in milk. It is enough that a small proportion are thus infected, but it is the growing conviction of a growing number of Englishmen that the proportion of those so infected is not really so very small. It is evidence sufficient of the importance that is attached in high places to the check of the spread of this infection, that of the Queen's herd at Windsor thirty-seven, at a swoop, have been lately destroyed—sacrificed by reason of a suspicion that they had the tubercle. It is not that you or I, middle-aged people, are about to pick up tubercles, and grow hectic and pine away, from the milk that we drink—if we do drink milk—but that children, whose staple food it is, and whose age makes them most susceptible to such infection, run every risk.

If this is the case, and public opinion is becoming alive to the danger of future generations, it is the manifest duty of all those who are convinced of this danger to impress the conviction upon those who are still unconvinced or indifferent. It is a very important question, and its solution is beset with difficulties. In word the solution is simple—all the infected cattle are to be slaughtered off with the royal ruthlessness that we saw at Windsor. In act this is at present impossible. Who is going to take the farmer's cattle, test them, destroy the infected, and give him compensation? The Government? Whence is it to find the vast sum necessary for the compensation? Whence is it to derive the sanction for legislation so heroic, so autocratic, and so drastic? The answer is: From the force of public opinion. As soon as public opinion becomes strong enough to make this a matter of its vital concern, so soon will the Government have the sinews to act; and until those sinews are so supplied it is in a state of incapacity. Lord Salisbury has admitted it, Mr. Chaplin has admitted it. Both, with a full conviction of the urgency of drastic legislation, perceive that such drastic legislation is an impossibility until vitalised by a great and sweeping force of public opinion.

But our present object is not merely, or even mainly, to put our little shoulders to the great wheel and give an atom more impulse to the public opinion that is slowly but surely gathering force. Our purpose is rather a practical one of detail, to draw attention to a comparatively novel way of discovering the presence of the tubercle by examination of the milk, rather than by inoculation of the cow and subsequent testing for reaction. The Clinical Research Association, whose address is 1, Southwark Street, S.E., is prepared to conduct examinations, by an expert bacteriologist, on samples of milk submitted. It is necessary that the samples be not less than half a pint in quantity from each cow, and that such samples should be forwarded in thoroughly-cleansed bottles, well rinsed with boiling water, and the report that the Association would give thereon would deal with the general quality of the milk, though not pretending to give the chemical analysis, as well as with the presence or absence of bacilli.

It is not easy, we think, to exaggerate the importance of the substitution of this test for the old one by the process of inoculation. This is a test to which no dairy-farmer can reasonably object to his cows being submitted. It is a test that every country gentleman would wish applied to the milk from his own cows, and it is a test which those who buy their milk from a dairy-farmer should insist on being applied. Not that we believe this test to be one whit more conclusive than the other—it is obvious, indeed, that it cannot give evidence of bacilli in the lung, and the lung only; but the great merit of this test by way of the milk is that it is free from so many of the objections that attach to the inoculation test. The most reluctant farmer cannot be a "conscientious objector" to this; whereas to the inoculation it was conceivable enough that objections might be raised. For our own part we do not credit that healthy cows could be evilly affected by inoculation with tuberculin; but, on the other hand, it has supplied many an old Tory dairyman with a reason or excuse against the test for tuberculosis. "The cows aint done not near so well ever since that there needle were put into 'em. I knowed they wouldn't." There was a deal of this sort of thing—not very intelligent criticism, but it was great in volume, and was bound to carry weight. But once the milk is out of the cow, no dairyman or prophet of evil can say that you have harmed the cow by what you have done with it.

It seems that with the recognition of the value of this bacteriological test the whole question of dealing with the spread of tuberculosis enters on a different stage—a stage in which it still presents very great difficulties, but difficulties which are very importantly diminished by the removal of the necessity for inoculation. This appears to be the most useful effect of the

new test from the point of view of the general good. From the private point of view it provides a test that is easy and without a drawback, for one that had several drawbacks and was rather troublesome. Governments will only be empowered to enforce the killing of infected cows when public opinion has fortified them with the credit necessary for the production of the requisite compensation. The question of the public slaughter-house is germane to this matter, and has been much mooted in the daily papers. In that regard we think much attention is due to a letter from one of our leading butchers—a source that cannot be considered unprejudiced, and whose arguments have therefore to be so much the more cogent in order to carry conviction—urging the great expense that the public abattoir would put upon the ratepayer, without any higher guarantee that he would get no bacilli for his money than could be supplied in the present private slaughter-houses if placed under the proper inspection. These be matters for experts, however. Enough if we may have drawn the attention of a few to the value and the simplicity of the bacteriological testing of the milk.



MR. CHARLES REID does well to be indignant with a reviewer attached to the *Manchester Guardian* who made bold to say that Mr. Cornish's book, "Animals of To-day," was "disfigured by several illustrations of 'stuffed' animals, which are neither more nor less than caricatures upon the originals." *COUNTRY LIFE* has a strong interest and regard for Mr. Cornish and Mr. Reid, both of whom are amongst its most valued contributors, and it resents, as warmly as Mr. Reid himself, a criticism made in "ignorance, my dear sir—sheer ignorance." Surely that critic wrote without so much as elementary knowledge of contemporary illustrations of natural history who imagined for a moment that Mr. Reid would attempt to pass off a photograph of a stuffed animal as if it were of the living animal; for it is matter of common knowledge that Mr. Reid has made a special study of photographing living animals only, and that he has attained at least as much success in this branch of art as any living man. Then the editor of the *Manchester Guardian* lets his reviewer say: "The statement to which exception is taken was made after careful examination, and the criticism was offered in good faith. If it is unwarranted, the fact is regretted." It is absolutely without warrant. Mr. Reid had absolutely offered to provide the reviewer with the names of the owners—so far as a wild animal can have an owner—of every animal portrayed. To the injury of shallow criticism, therefore, the reviewer adds the insult of sullen and conditional apology.

Mr. Reid, in his letter, says: "My published collection of several thousands of animal photographs does not contain one specimen of a stuffed bird or beast. If it did I should feel disgraced, even should the imposition never be detected." That is plain enough. Mr. Reid, however, clearly cannot mean that to photograph stuffed animals is, in itself, disgraceful; for when this is done without concealment, as in the case of the beautiful group of peewits which we published recently, the result is often excellent and useful. The disgrace would consist in trying to foist the picture of the stuffed beast upon the public on the false pretence that the living beast had been stalked and shot with the camera. No doubt, too, the second is the nobler kind of Art.

Folk who have the good fortune to live in the country must surely sympathise most strongly with the spirit of Mr. Gibson's letter to the *Times* of January 18th, wherein he refers to the hardship inflicted on London workers by the shutting of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington at dark—say, roughly, four o'clock in the winter. Mr. Gibson rightly points out that the principal danger that it was sought to avert by shutting at this hour—that of fire—no longer has its force since the introduction of the electric light. The argument is no longer sound. On the other hand, the present arrangement means the shutting of the Museum and the closing of this beautiful exhibition

at the very hour at which it becomes possible for the great mass of the public to enjoy it. During the daylight hours they are occupied by their work. The arguments that will be urged against the electric lighting and the keeping open of the Museum after dark are first the expense, and secondly the extra work put on the staff. But the first point is one that we think the richer members of the public would determine by the opening of their purse-strings, if invited to do so, for the sake of the poorer members, and the second might be met by some arrangement giving shorter morning hours in recompense for those tacked on in the evening. And, after all, the door-keeping and watching staff is not large. We sincerely hope that Mr. Gibson's letter may meet with the attention that it deserves.

One of the most dramatic incidents of the recent floods was the overflow of Tangley Mere, a very picturesque sheet of water not far from Albury, in the Guildford district. It is not to be supposed that the beauty of the Mere has been permanently damaged; the damage has been to all that came in the way of the enormous body of escaping water. It is estimated, we see, that between 7,000,000 and 8,000,000 gallons of water were suddenly released by the forcing of the artificial dam at which workmen were engaged at the very moment the disaster took place. Fortunately enough no lives were lost. But hedges were swept impartially away, with all obstacles that the water met on its path, the road between Guildford and Dorking was seriously damaged, a small by-road had its macadamising bodily removed, and the South Eastern Railway Company's line to Reading was in grave danger for many minutes. Finally, the great flood found its way into a tributary stream of the Wey, and the danger was over. It is an episode that writes its lesson large for all to consider who have a big body of water kept back by artificial barriers.

The weather seems to be doing its best to make up for us the deficiency in our rainfall for the last few years. True, snow would help us more than all, but let us be grateful for what we have. But, snow or no snow, it is very sure that if we do not have some cold weather, some frost, the crop of insects that may plague us and our gardens next spring is likely to be rather intolerable. It was bad enough after the mild winter of 1897-98, and if that winter is to be followed by another of like temperature, as seems more than probable, we may look forward to an experience rather like one of the plagues of Egypt. But there is time for much to happen yet. We are old enough to remember the winter of 1893-94, which did not even begin until we were all congratulating ourselves that it was over. The birds seem rather puzzled by the abnormal conditions. There are many landrails, remaining late, and probably intending to remain all the winter through, and at the same time we hear of wild swans on the coast, which generally means very severe weather in the Cattegat and Zuyder Zee—weather that very often comes on to us here.

The country-side bears traces of the gale in all directions. Here you may see a row of ricks with their thatches blown off; there lies a giant tree uprooted. Barns and outhouses have lost their tiles or slates, and the sou'-wester has come up laden with moisture, which has fallen copiously for the past week. Yet so dry is the land that it is as absorbent as a sponge, and it is only on the heaviest clays that one finds water standing on the surface. On the whole, rains have been acceptable and have done much good. It is not only in the East End of London that water has been scarce of late. On many a farm the question of how to find water for the stock has been an anxious one; it has often had to be carried for long distances, and at great expense. Now ponds and ditches are getting filled up, and wells are rising. But the ordinary operations of the farm can be carried on without much hindrance. The plough on the lighter soils can be kept going on the land where turnips have been fed off by sheep. This should always be done wherever possible. Keep the plough going right up to the hurdles, and you will get the best results from the manure which the sheep leave behind them. There are many complaints that the turnips are not going very far this winter; in many cases they are going quite rotten. There is danger in this to flocks of breeding ewes, as there is no more frequent cause of abortion than unsound turnips. Give plenty of dry food, and take care that the layer is frequently changed. Malt culm has been found to be very beneficial in these cases.

The state of the growing crops is such as to make farmers dread hard frost, if it should be unaccompanied by snow. Wheat nearly covers the ground, and has tillered out wonderfully. Nearly every grain that was planted grew. This will be the sort of year to find out the weak places in the fields—where they are badly drained, or have been indifferently cultivated. As to the prices of corn, they are beginning to make farmers despair again. Good dry 18st. wheat of magnificent quality is being sold at 25s. or 26s. a quarter; and the ever-increasing

foreign supply seems to forbid any hope of a present rise. Nor will there be another corner in Chicago for some time to come. And the annoying part of the business is that the public seems to get none of the benefit of these low prices. The bakers were ready enough to put up the prices of bread last summer, but they are an unconscionable time dropping them again. Under these circumstances it would seem to be good policy to use some of this cheap wheat on the farm in place of artificial feeding-stuffs. Sheep will do very well on raw wheat if it is given in small quantities at first; and wheat at £6 a ton must be cheaper than linseed cake at £8, especially when carriage both ways has to be reckoned. Anyhow low prices all round have to be faced; wool is making sevenpence a pound; mutton and beef are very low in price; and on all sides amongst farmers one hears the demand for a small protective duty on agricultural products.

The remarkable prices realised at the sale of Mr. Alexander Henderson's Shires last week must have proved eminently satisfactory to the breeders of this class of horse. Thirty-nine animals averaged £209 3s. 10d. each; fourteen brood mares averaging £278 8s.; eight yearling fillies, £116 11s.; six two year old fillies, £178 10s.; and six three year old fillies, £157 17s. The highest price of the day, 950 guineas, was realised by the eight year old bay mare Aurea, which took the championship at the Agricultural Hall last year; but the four year old bay, Buscot Queen, went up to 725 guineas, and the yearling colt to 700 guineas, Lord Wantage being the purchaser in both cases. No fewer than fifteen of the lots were knocked down at over 200 guineas. Indeed the prices have only been once surpassed, namely, upon the occasion of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales's sale of Shires last year, when the record average of £225 7s. 9d. was reached.

Since the passing of the new Billiard Rules by the Billiard Association we often hear a little friendly discussion in country houses on the precise effect of the debarring of the push stroke. It is sometimes argued, though quite, as we are bound to think, without reason, that while the push, pure and simple, is barred, it is still permitted to strike the ball with a follow-on of the cue so as to drive it on through the object ball if the latter be close up to the striker's ball. The rule, as it seems to us, is very explicit on the point: "The ball shall be struck with the point of the cue, and not 'pushed.' If, after the striker's ball has been forced against an object ball, the point of his cue remain or come in contact with his ball, the stroke is foul." Can any wording conceivably be more clear? Obviously the drive through is not permitted. Altogether, in considering these rules, one is bound to be much struck by the clearness of their definition. There are those who cavil at the Billiard Association, urging that a committee of amateurs is required; but while the existing authority does its work so well, what need have we to seek to alter it? It is by its results that it is to be judged, and these are surely good.

When the results of this season's sport come to be totalled up, they cannot but be found disappointing. Partridges have been very scarce, and pheasants have done poorly. Moreover, the leaf stayed so late on the tree that it was impossible to get the coverts properly shot at a reasonable date, and the high winds of January have made the birds passing hard to stop at the later shoots. Rabbits, after showing a very fine promise in the spring, disappeared mysteriously before the shooting season began, killed off apparently by ailments engendered by the wet weather that visited most of England in October after the long drought; and hares, that had seemed to be picking up their numbers lately, suffered from the like cause.

It is singular enough that in a year so poor in rabbits should have been made what is, we believe, very easily the record bag of rabbits in a day's shooting. This record was made at Blenheim, where five guns killed only a few less than 7,500 bunnies in a single day. It is noteworthy, too, that this was by no means a massacre, for far the greater number of them were shot out in grass fields, which is as much as to say that they were running as rabbits can run—all sporting shots. Granted that the shooters held fairly straight, it is to be estimated that each must have fired some 2,500 cartridges, which, even with light rabbit loads, means a pretty good day's work.

Surely black rabbits are becoming much more common than they used to be. We can well remember the time when the sight of a black rabbit used to fill us, the guns and all the beaters, with astonished admiration, so that the call of "Black rabbit" grew to be almost as dangerous as that of "Woodcock." But now we seem to see and to shoot black rabbits with no quickening of the pulses. Is it that we are growing disillusioned merely, or is it not rather that the rabbit is throwing back to the original black colour more than of old; and is not this, too, to be looked on as a mark of decadence among the feeble coney folk?

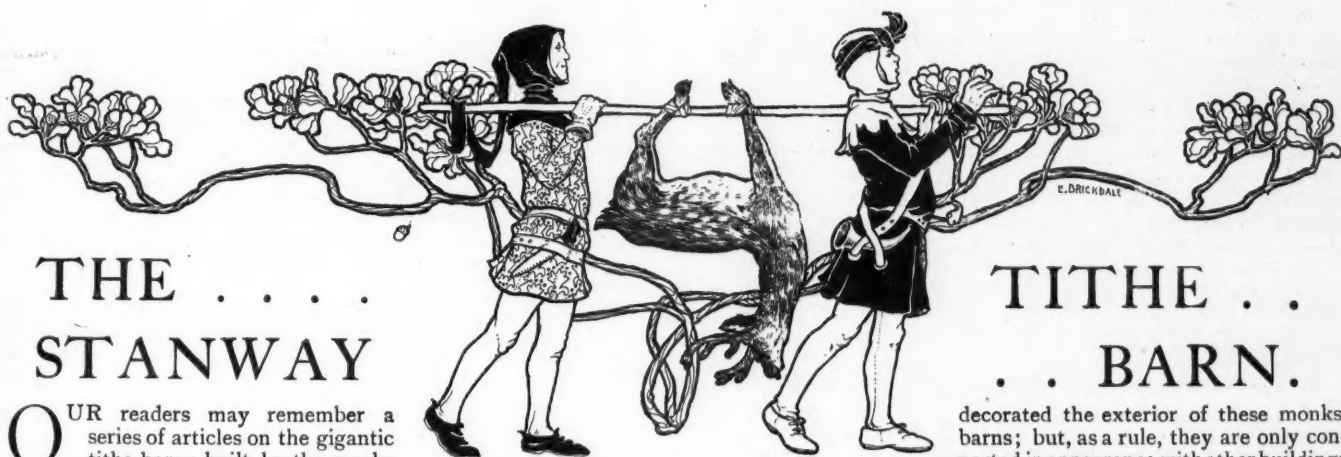
We have received one or two letters from correspondents on the subject of retrievers refusing to lift snipe and woodcock—sometimes one or the other, and sometimes both—but we are surprised that none of them refer to the extreme reluctance so common among spaniels to touch anything of the genus *Scolopax*. It may be the exception among retrievers to show repugnance to the snipe or woodcock; it is certainly very much the exception among spaniels to find one that will consent to have anything to do with them. In close-growing reeds a spaniel is the best assistant a gunner can have for flushing snipe, and his value is immensely increased if he can be induced to retrieve them, so often do they fall in water where the shooter cannot reach them without a wetting.

There are evidences of the abnormal mildness of the winter all over the Southern Counties—at all events, of England—in the rhododendrons here and there out in flower, and the nets already over the plum trees to save their buds from the beaks of the bullfinches. By this time, in most years, there are not plum buds to be pecked; and this year not only are the plum buds very early, but there seem more bullfinches than ever before to peck at them. There is no doubt that the operation of the Wild Birds' Protection Act ought to have some effect, and possibly it is that effect that we see in the multitudinous bullfinches pecking at the plum buds. There are two sorts of birds that specially afflict orchards, of which the trees are so often plum and cherry, namely, bullfinches and starlings. The bullfinch pecks out the plum bud, and the starling eats the ripe cherry; and of both of these species there seems to have been a great increase during the last few years. That starlings have increased in numbers is a very generally admitted fact; and bullfinches, too, seem to be gaining on their previous census. This is hard on the fruit trees. The owner has his resource with the bullfinches—he can shoot them, jolly little fellows though they are, as they go from tree to tree. This is better than attacking them while on the tree, for the shot may then do as much damage as the birds. The bullfinch, we fear, apart from his beauty, has few redeeming qualities; but the starling is a good friend to the gardener at all times except when cherries are ripe. Then he is a real pest, and it is right in the middle of the close time, so that he has a legal remedy if he be shot. It appears then that the only thing to do is to net the cherry trees, and this is a matter of no light expense. Unless the European climate is changing altogether, as the *Times* St. Petersburg correspondent seems to think, we shall not often have to net plum trees against the bullfinches in January. Yet, withal, it is not a very early lambing season, and the springs have not even yet broken properly.

The sayings and doings of parsons and clerks have a knack of amusing people who are neither; nor do they lose their power of entertainment if the performers live across the Border. There the person who discharges the duties of a clerk enjoys the title of Precentor. There may be some who do not know that on one occasion a Scotch minister, leaning from his pulpit, spoke as follows: "Ma freends, ye are ma sheep, an' I am your shepherd; an' ye, Wullie Hodson" (here he beamed on the precentor, who sat below him), "are ma *doug*." "Ma freends," he added, after a pause, "I speak parabolically." "'Deed, sir," retorted the precentor, as he leapt up and turned round angrily, "but I think ye speak d—d impudently." In this rubber honours may be said to have been "easy," but in another contest a precentor most distinctly scored. It would often happen that a precentor held office for long years, while ministers would come and go; consequently a new minister would stand in awe of a precentor. In a certain parish appeared such a minister, and he was anxious to discover the precentor's view of his "discourse." He threw many many flies—to speak parabolically—but the precentor would not rise. At last he had to ask the precentor, in so many words, what he thought about the sermon. In answer, the precentor said he had three points to urge against it, and, by way of explanation, it may be added that a *written* sermon does not go for much in certain parts: "First, ye *read* it. Secondly, ye *didna* read it *weel*. Thirdly, it wasna *wurth* the readin'."

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece is from a photograph of Mrs. Collis St. Hill, *née* Miss Maryon-Wilson, who was married on Monday last at St. Augustine's Church, Queen's Gate. She is a sister of Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson, Bart., and the second daughter of the late Baronet, who died in 1897. The Maryon-Wilsons are hereditary Lords of the Manor of Hampstead, once important, but shorn of its fair proportions when, during the lifetime of Sir Thomas Maryon-Wilson, the ninth Baronet, the rights over the heath were acquired for the public benefit. A trip round the world is forming the honeymoon.



THE STANWAY

OUR readers may remember a series of articles on the gigantic tithe barns built by the monks

before the Reformation to hold the produce of the Abbey lands, or the "tenth" collected from distant estates in the form of tithes. Some of these barns, especially those at Coxwell, in Berkshire, Great Camden, near Evesham, Pilton, in Wiltshire, and Coombe, in Gloucestershire, are built on a scale not equalled since by any buildings whatever, designed for the purposes of agriculture, raised in this country since the dissolution of the monasteries. The tithe barn of the Abbots of Reading at Cholsey was as long as Westminster Hall; that owned by the Prince Abbott of Beaulieu in the New Forest was nearly as large; and in the barn at Acton Burnell a Parliament was held. On the site of the present Stanway Place, built by the Tracy family in 1626, was once a country house of the Abbots of Tewkesbury, and the great barn was built to hold their tithes. Sometimes crosses over the gables and niches for saints

TITHE BARN.

decorated the exterior of these monks' barns; but, as a rule, they are only connected in appearance with other buildings

made by the hands of the religious by their size, solidity, and permanence of design. At Great Coxwell, near Faringdon, the tithe barn is large enough to allow a loaded waggon and horses to be driven into it and to turn round. As a rule these buildings fall into two types. Some are built with high side walls, and air and light admitted by narrow windows or slits in the walls. This is the commonest design, and most effective from an architectural point of view. That at Coombe, in Gloucestershire, is cruciform, with two transepts. The other design, of which the Stanway barn is, and Cholsey tithe barn was, an example, have low side walls and an immense roof. Formerly light was hardly needed in these stores, except when the corn was being carted in, and then, no doubt, the open doors gave enough light, as they do now in ordinary barns. The small, Early English door seen on the side of the Stanway barn is

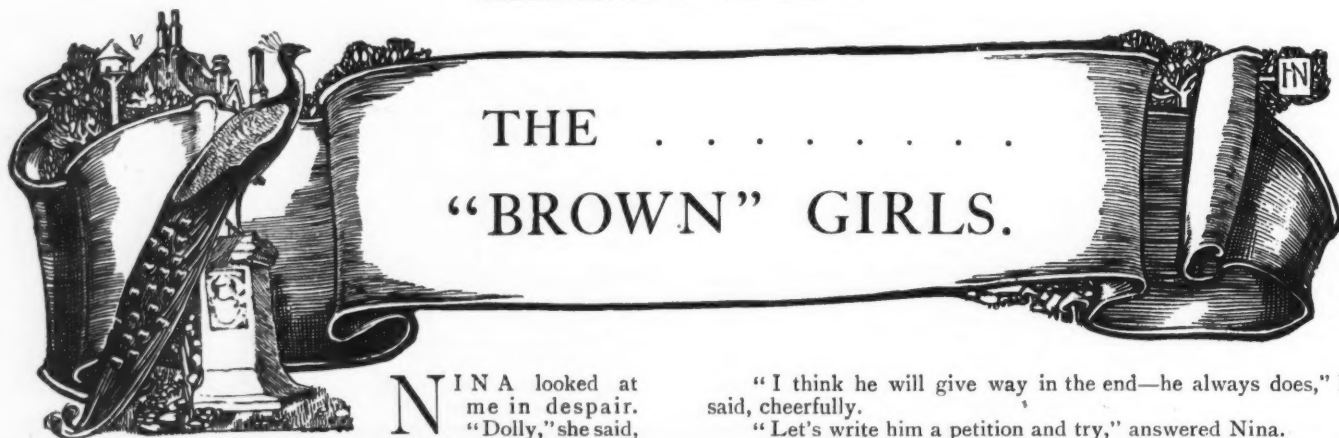


clearly meant for other purposes than for carting in grain. Perhaps this barn was a "store" for some other form of goods than grain and straw. In such roofs as this air was let in by small ventilators covered by louvres, and these are now often replaced, as at Stanway, by thick plates of glass. There are two rows of these top-lights in this barn. But in all cases the roof was the most remarkable feature of the building. Many of them are like the roof of a large railway terminus, but made of timber, not of iron. I have never seen any work built since 1532 which can approach this, except that constructed for a purpose which seems so absolutely dissociated from monks, corn crops, and barns, that to mention it may provoke a smile. I refer to the roofs of the great building docks in the old parts of Chatham and, I think, Portsmouth Dockyard. If you can obtain permission, go into Chatham Dockyard on a Saturday afternoon, when not a soul except the ever-vigilant policeman is left in the place.

Stand under the vaults of one of these old building-slips,

with a 30ft. dock below, a half-built battleship on the stocks, and the huge sheltering vault of timbers, with hundreds of top-lights, above the ship, and you have something between the nave of a cathedral and the roof of one of the gigantic monks' barns. The stillness, after the day's clamour, aids the association of ideas. An excellent modern use for these monks' barns is to make them serve as village halls and for parish entertainments. Something of this kind is done at Stanway.

The barn, which was used as a timber and fuel store, was restored by the present Earl of Wemyss, then Lord Elcho, in 1875, when residing at Stanway Place. It is now put to various uses. In wet weather it is used as a tennis court, and at other times as a hall for political and other meetings, dances, and entertainments. It is believed to have been built about the year 1,400, though parts of the barn are older. It is 95ft. long, 29ft. wide, and 38ft. high to the apex of the roof, so there is ample "cubical contents" of air to satisfy the most exacting licensing committee for public entertainments.



NINA looked at me in despair. "Dolly," she said, sadly, "it's no use; we simply can't go—it's too utterly expensive, and you—"

"My dear Nina," I interrupted, "I intend to go, and when I intend—*c'est un fait accompli*."

"Your French accent is delicious, Dolly," allowed my sister, "but—forgive me, dear—I merely doubt your capabilities."

"What! After living with me for eighteen years?"

"Precisely, for that very reason. By the way, it's a little longer than that, isn't it? Let me see, I am nineteen, and you are—"

"Never mind my age," I said, with great dignity, as I looked hard at my younger sister; "the question is, are we going to Lady Marchmont's, or are we not?"

"I fear we are not," replied Nina; and she continued, tragically, "And why not? Simply because it means changing our frocks at least three times a day."

"Quite three times," I added.

"Well, call it three times, and a tea-gown," said Nina, impatiently. "And we haven't any frocks—at least, none worth changing into. Can't you do anything with papa?" she said, entreatingly; "you know you manage him so well sometimes, Dolly, and I even believe he is a little afraid of you."

"Afraid!" I echoed, blankly—"I wish he were; he's afraid of no one, Nina, neither man, devil—"

"Nor his daughters," put in Nina; "but aren't we misquoting?"

"Perhaps we are; but it's enough to make anyone misquote. It's really too bad. There he is," I waved my hand, and Nina looked sympathetically round, "rolling, positively rolling in—"

"Filthy lucre," suggested Nina.

"No, my dear, not filthy lucre at all, but nice clean money. There he is, I say, a widower with two good-looking—"

"And elegant," put in Nina.

"And elegant," I agreed; "two good-looking and elegant daughters; and here we are trying to clothe ourselves on a paltry hundred a year!"

"It's a positive crime," said Nina, "a crying shame, only we do the crying and he hasn't the grace to feel the shame. Dolly, do think of something."

I meditated, I even tried to be cheerful. "Perhaps he will raise our allowances this time," I suggested, cheerfully.

"And perhaps he won't," snapped Nina; "I don't believe, Doll, that he has got over his 'after-Christmas bills' attack yet."

"Oh, I think he has, or at any rate he's convalescent; remember those lovely fans he gave us last week."

"Yes, they were lovely, and he really is an old dear," murmured Nina; "his bark is much worse than his bite, only," sighing, "I wish he didn't bark quite so often. Why can't he give us our two hundred a year? We," magnanimously—"we would buy our own fans then!"

"I think he will give way in the end—he always does," I said, cheerfully.

"Let's write him a petition and try," answered Nina.

"No," I said, bravely, "there is nothing like facing a situation—or a father, and we'll do it now, Nina. I know he's in the study—come along," and as I got up I felt the light of battle rising in my eye.

We went downstairs, and I gently opened the study door. Papa was busy writing, and did not even look up. I knew he did not like being interrupted, but, after all, this was a business interview. Nina and I scorned taking advantage of an after-dinner generosity which we feared might result in an after-breakfast reconsideration, so we purposely chose the afternoon. All we wanted was justice—justice in cold blood—and two hundred a year.

Nina remained in the passage, and put her foot gently against the door when I tried to close it. This I thought a little mean of her, as it made me nervous to feel she was listening. However, I walked boldly in and said "Papa."

He took no notice, but went on carefully sealing an envelope; then he rose to ring the bell, and in doing so nearly fell over me—as we happened to both step forward at the same moment.

"Ah, Dolly, is that you?" he said, cheerily. "What is it, my dear? Have you brought me a cup of tea, or come to borrow a stamp—eh?"

Papa's manner was very pleasant, but I believe it was purely superficial, as it completely vanished when I said, "No, papa, dear; I have come to ask you a small favour."

He took out his watch, actually took out his watch before my very face, and looked at it, as though I were an insurance agent or a friend who wanted to borrow a trifle, and then he said, "I'm very busy, Dolly, very busy, but I can give you five minutes. What is it *now*?"

I detest the word "now" uttered with that emphasis.

I gulped something down in my throat (Nina told me afterwards it was hysterics), and I said, with what I believed to be my sweetest smile, "Er, papa, dear" (the "dear" nearly choked me), "I—we—want you to kindly raise our allowances."

Papa sat down in rather an unnecessary hurry, I thought, and began absently directing long blue envelopes—how I hate long blue envelopes—while I went on nervously, "You know we have only a hundred a year each, papa, and it's impossible to manage on that; we can't go to Lady Marchmont's unless we have lots of new things, because the girls there are always so smart, and we really haven't any decent frocks; and you know, papa, a hundred a year is so very little, when you think" (I felt Nina's eye on me through the door, and waxed eloquent) "what heaps and heaps of things girls have to buy. There are not only frocks, but hats—and gloves—and scent—and—and everything."

I felt this was rather a lame ending, but I was quite out of breath, and those horrible blue envelopes put everything else out of my head.

Papa did not take the slightest notice of my speech. He may have been waiting for me to regain my breath and finish, or

he may have been under the impression that "silence is golden." If that was his reason, I totally disagree with him; I think silence is absolutely detestable.

However, I waited until I heard Nina cough, and then I said, timidly, "Papa——"

"Well, Dorothy?"

This was not promising, but I murmured, despairingly, "When we asked you last time, you said you might——"

"Pigs might fly, but they are very unlikely birds," said papa, interrupting me.

I thought this so vulgar that I walked out of the room with my head very high and my spirits very low, and Nina and I retired to "consider matters."

"I knew he wouldn't," said Nina. "Isn't he a pig?"

"No," I replied, viciously, "he's worse; he's a *father*."

Suddenly Nina sprang out of her chair. "Doll," she cried, "I've got an idea."

"Never," I said, sympathetically; "what is it, dear?"

"Come into my room," she answered, excitedly, "and you'll see."

We went in, and she opened one of her dress cupboards and disappeared for at least five seconds. Then she reappeared with a light, bronze-brown dress in her arms.

"Do you see this, Doll?"

"Yes," I said, "I've got one like it, only I have two bodices to mine, one high and one low, and they're both hideous."

"So are mine," she said, triumphantly, "and that's just the point. You know we never wear them because they are so unbecoming; but I tell you what we'll do, Doll—we'll wear them every day and all day, and we'll wear them at the Antons' 'At Home' on Thursday week." (The Antons are very old and valued friends of papa's.)

"And then?" I queried.

"And then. Why you know we have nearly a month before we go to the Marchmonts, and papa will feel ill at the sight of those brown frocks long before then."

"Supposing he tells us to change them?"

Nina looked round on a fairly well-filled wardrobe. "These are all more or less out of fashion," she said, meditatively, "and, if necessary, Doll, we'll give them all away."

"Nina," I said, admiringly, "if only on the principle that two heads are better than one, you ought to marry a diplomatist."

"I will, dear," she said, and we went down to tea.

That evening and the next day and on the day afterwards and the day after that we cheerfully wore our brown frocks. So as to avoid all appearance of trying to take a mean advantage of papa, we varied them as much as possible by wearing a blue sash one day, a yellow one the next, and so on. Men are very unobservant (about the women who belong to them), and I believe papa only noticed the sashes, as he said nothing. On Saturday we gave a little dinner—in our brown frocks; on Sunday we dined at the Berkeley—in our brown frocks; and on the Thursday following we went to the Antons—also in our brown frocks.

I thought papa looked a little disappointed when he saw us coming down the stairs, and I believe he was at last beginning to notice that we were rather shabby, but he only said, rather gruffly, "What a beastly colour those dresses are, girls. Haven't you got anything else you can wear?"

"No, papa, dear, we haven't," I said, sweetly; "all our other frocks are unfortunately worn out, but I think these look all right. It's true they are not quite in the present fashion, but," cheerfully, "we don't mind that, do we, Nina?"

"Not at all," acquiesced Nina; "besides, they are so ladylike."

Papa got into the carriage without another word; if there is one thing he detests above another it is the word ladylike.

We enjoyed the Antons' "At Home" very much. The room was full of smart people, and, as Nina triumphantly whispered to me, our shabbiness "stood out."

Towards the end of the evening we were sitting in a little alcove near papa, when we suddenly heard two women who were standing in front of us, but completely hidden by a large palm, talking about us—and him.

"Is Sir Morton Bankshire here to-night?" asked one whom I recognised as Mrs. Felton, whom I did not know excepting by sight.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Crolington, whom I did know, "he is; why do you ask?"

Mrs. Felton laughed. "Oh, I only wanted to know him; widowers always interest me—they have such a 'free unfettered' air about them."

"There is nothing very free or unfettered about him, poor man," said Mrs. Crolington; "he has two grown-up daughters."

"Really—what are they like?"

"Oh, rather pretty, tall, fair girls, vilely dressed in hideous

brown frocks; they have worn those same frocks for—for weeks" (this was a slight exaggeration, but Nina and I freely forgave her). "It is a pity," she went on, "because they used to dress rather well."

"I think I saw them just now," said Mrs. Felton; "I noticed they looked shabby—but I supposed they were poor." Nina pinched me, and papa breathed heavily.

"Poor!" exclaimed Mrs. Crolington. "My dear, he's enormously rich. He has gold mines out at Klondyke, or coal mines in Yorkshire, or—something. But, like all men, I suppose he spends any amount on himself and grudges his women-folk the common luxuries of life!"

"It's rather hard on them," said Mrs. Felton, and Nina and I blessed her.

"I had such fun just now," said Mrs. Crolington; "a man asked me who they were, and I said, Who?—the 'Brown' girls. He actually went off to find Mrs. Anton and ask her to introduce him to the Misses Brown. Aren't men dense?" They laughed and moved away, and papa rose with an exclamation I will not repeat.

He put us into the carriage and said he would walk home, that it was a fine night, and he should enjoy the air. I only hope he did.

After breakfast the next morning he said, suddenly, "Girls, I'm going down to Brighton this afternoon for a few days. I shall be back on Tuesday or Wednesday. I—er—I have been considering the question of your allowances, and—er—I have decided to raise them."

"Oh, thank you, papa, dear," cried Nina, sweetly, while I murmured, "It's awfully good of you."

Papa turned round on his way to the door and gave me a look (it ought to have been directed at Nina) which I shall "remember to my dying hour," as the novelists say, and said very slowly and emphatically, "And don't either of you under any circumstances ever let me see those d—d brown dresses again." Then he left the room.

R. NEISH.

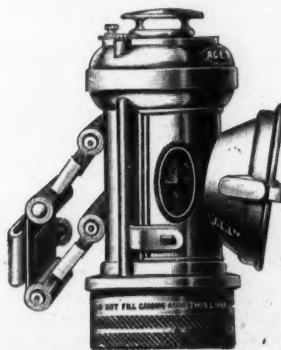


THE latest novelty in the cycling world is not destined, I fear, to achieve much success. It is called the "Twin Wheel Cycle," and is practically a tricycle, of which the driving wheels are so close together that the hub flanges meet. There is just room between the spokes for the chain ring, and the diagonal tube is duplicated a few inches above the crank axle to permit of central driving being employed. The back stays are not carried up to the seat bracket, but are brazed to a horizontal projection therefrom, and there is a considerable distance between the crank bracket and the driving wheels, the result being an unusually long wheel base. It is claimed that the machine possesses the advantages of "perfect safety from skidding and side-slip"; that "no learning is required," and that it "can be ridden at once by a beginner"; that it is "unique for riding in traffic—a rider can stop, remain stationary, or pedal backwards if necessary." It is further contended that, owing to the manner in which the rider is balanced, his weight is distributed over the two tyres at the rear instead of one as on the ordinary safety, and that, as a consequence, the liability of any substance to penetrate the tyres is reduced to one-half.

Certain other claims are mentioned which need not be enumerated here, but it is none the less doubtful if the machine will meet with much approval. It recalls the Di-cycle of three or four years ago, a machine which had twin wheels also, but these were placed at the front instead of at the rear. What

the steering must be like of the Twin cycle one is appalled to contemplate; personally I would rather steer a tandem through the thickest traffic of the Strand on the greyest of days than attempt to take a Twin cycle round an ordinary corner. Narrow-base tricycles are tricky enough, but the Twin cycle, with its driving wheels only a few inches apart, would baffle even a trick rider unless he slowed down to a walking pace at every turn. Moreover, the connections between the crank bracket and the back forks look distinctly weak, and a combination of a steep hill and a heavy rider would inevitably produce a distinct bending of the frame.

The numerous acetylene lamps with which the market has been flooded of late have mostly been of foreign manufacture, but they have been sold in such large numbers that it was only natural for English makers to take up the running also. Of the ordinary oil-burning lamps there are none better than, and few, if any, as good as, those made by Messrs. Lucas, of Birmingham, and it was to be



expected that superior finish would characterise anything they might produce in the way of a gas lamp. This feature certainly characterises the Acetylator illustrated herewith, which offers a marked contrast to the somewhat flimsy construction of some of the foreign-made articles; in fact, except for the difference in shape it would not suggest at first sight that it was one of the acetylene varieties at all. The lamp is designed not to give too powerful a glare, and appeals to those riders who prefer cleanliness to other considerations, and object to the undoubted dirtiness and trouble of keeping clean the conventional types which use oil. Unlike many acetylene lamps, the Acetylator is sent out fully equipped, with a cleaner for the carbide container, a wire for clearing the burner after use and preventing the choking which is so common with gas lamps, and also an air-tight tin box containing a spare charge of carbide. The latter is particularly useful, as, needless to say, carbide is not the sort of stuff to be handled carelessly.

Some genius reported the other day an experience for which he apparently considered himself deserving of compassion. He had placed a charge of carbide, protected only by a piece of paper, in his coat pocket, and while out riding was overtaken by a drenching rain-storm. Not being provided with a mackintosh cape, his coat in due course was soaked through, and he suddenly became conscious of the emanation of an intolerable odour, the fumes of which grew so powerful that he was obliged to dismount hastily and cast his coat away. What had happened was obvious enough—the water had penetrated to the carbide, and the generation of acetylene gas had naturally followed. One wonders that an unpractical person like this should have ventured to handle acetylene lamps at all; their superior cleanliness and added illuminating power are dear advantages in the hands of a careless owner.

The management of an acetylene lamp, nevertheless, is a matter of great simplicity if properly understood. It is only necessary in the first instance to place the charge of carbide in the generator, taking care not to use too much, or room will not be left for it to expand under the action of the water. If too much carbide be used it will jam the generator and make it difficult to screw it on and off the lamp. Care should also be taken when replacing the generator after charging to screw it tightly home, so as to preclude all possibility of leakage; I mention this because I have seen a generator improperly screwed and an escape of gas occur in consequence. To light the lamp it is only necessary to pour water through the tube provided, and wait for a minute or so until it has had time to get to work on the carbide and generate some gas. A light may then be applied to the burner, and a little experience will show the degree to which the regulating tap requires to be turned. If the charge of carbide be not used up at the end of the journey, it may be used again, though the water must be allowed to remain on for a longer period before applying a match; many riders, however, prefer to throw away the half-used carbide, as it may cake in the generator and become difficult to dislodge. To extinguish the lamp it is better to turn the regulator off and let the gas burn itself out. The light should not be blown out, because the smell of the escaping gas is objectionable.

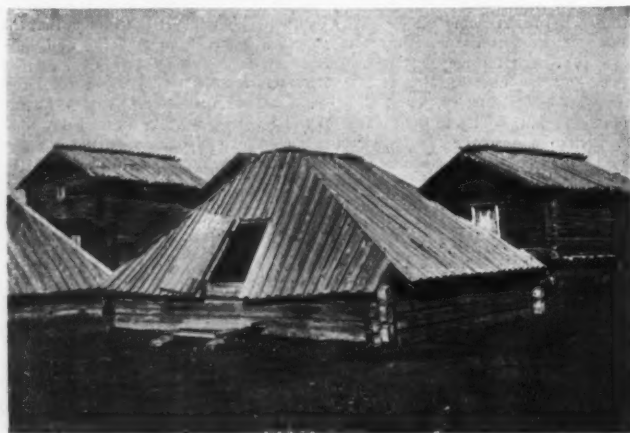
Gas will continue to generate after the water is turned off until all moisture in the generator is used up. This cannot be avoided in an acetylene lamp, but in practice it is easy to turn off the water while riding, so that the gas will be nearly exhausted by the end of the journey. The longer the lamp has been burning the more moist carbide there will be in the generator, and the longer it will take for the light to go out.

THE PILGRIM.



ARVIDSJÄUR is a little village in Southern Lapland, a day's drive from the Swedish railway station at Jörn, along a sandy, hillocky road through stunted draggled pine forests. Here, towards the end of last July, I found myself with two or three days on my hands before I could be joined by a friend with whom I intended to push my way into the interior after trout and grayling.

The village was pretty enough, with its long straight street of smartly-painted two-storied wooden Swedish houses, leading up to the big wooden church, one of the oldest in Lapland; and very interesting, too, was the Lapp village away at the back in



DESERTED LAPP HUTS.

a separate field, a medley of huts and hovels of every shape and size and style of architecture, all locked up and deserted now, for their owners were away on the fjelds with their reindeer. But I had come to these distant parts to catch fish. The map marked a likely-looking chain of small lakes not far to the north of the village, the upper waters of the Byske river. If I could only get hold of a boat and a man I might fill up my leisure time to some profit.

But to propose such a plan was easier than to execute it. It was the beginning of the hay harvest. Every able-bodied

man seemed to be at work in the fields. The old lady who managed the inn was quite useless; she could find no one. The skyds boys who were hanging about the stables were all busy. My fellow-guests in the inn—Swedes of the bagmen type—were all too drunk to be anything more than vaguely though embarrassingly friendly.

In vain I hunted the village; not a man could I get. Then suddenly, as I passed the house of the chemist (a very important functionary in these parts), it floated across my memory that he was the "ombud," or local representative of the powerful Swedish Touring Club, of which I was a member. Walking in, I introduced myself and presented my credentials. Never did a worried traveller receive a heartier welcome. No trouble was too great for the kind and courteous Swede. He hurried forth, and was back in a few minutes with the promise of what I needed.

As I sat talking to him in his study there suddenly appeared at the door a quaint figure. It was a little dirty wizened man, with dark yellow skin and ragged straight hair; a long woollen tunic, open at the neck, fell to his knees, girt loosely with a leather belt a little below the waist; tightly-fitting yellow leather trousers covered his stumpy bow legs, and on his feet he wore soft leather shoes with upturned points, fastened at the ankle with a bandage of list wound halfway up the calf. From his head he removed a battered "bowler" hat, the only touch of modernity about him, and there he stood, shuffling his legs and smiling vaguely at us, with his dirty snuff-begrimed lips and teeth. He was one of the few Lapps left behind in the village; he owned a boat, and was to be my gillie.

As I returned to the inn to get my fishing toggery I was button-holed, to my dismay, by one of the friendliest of the bagmen crew. Might he come with me to see the fishing? To escape, I weakly consented, but loaded him with my camera.

The walk through the tangled pine woods to the banks of the lake Arvesjaur (jaur is the Lappish for lake) took twenty minutes. It was a lovely morning following a wet, stormy night. Overhead the sun blazed down from a cloudless azure sky, glinting through the tall pines, sparkling on the still wet leaves, and throwing up the rich colours of the moss and ferns and flowers and under shrubs. On such a day Lapland seems an earthly paradise, a marvellous contrast to the bleak, heartless monotony of the landscape in dull and stormy weather. But there was little temptation to linger over this beauty. The air was bright with dancing insects, shrill with the merry piping of the deadly

mosquito. Gloves, upturned collar, and tobacco smoke were a poor protection against their ravenous onslaughts, but once on the water away from the swampy woods we knew we should be less troubled.

The boat proved an excellent one, lightly built, rather on the lines of a broad-beamed canoe, and propelled by a pair of short paddles or sculls attached to single thole pins by a lashing made of twisted birch shoot. The little Lapp baled it with a small tray of woven birch bark, then drew from his dirty tunic a tiny wooden box, rudely carved, from which he politely offered us a mouthful of snuff—they eat their snuff in Lapland, not sniff it—and at last off we pushed.

It was a long row across the lake, about an hour. The little Lapp took his work easily, whilst we lay lazily in the bottom of the seatless boat and feasted our eyes on the beauty of the lake, embosoming in its deep blue the emerald reflections of the wooded shores and islands, or sparkling and flashing with silver and gold towards the sun. A few short runs at the phantom which I trailed behind kept me awake, but no fish of over $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. showed itself. Soon my Swedish companion broke in on my dreamy bliss with inane chatter. He was an inn-keeper, he told me, from further down the valley towards Jörn. He had been teaching himself English last winter, and so he would talk English to me. Would I stay at his house on my return? He promised "stout outsights" and "stout spise." My parboiled brain grew giddy with the vain effort to understand his medley of language, but he meant fine views and good food. Did I want to fisk? He had "stout fisk" in his "sea." What fish? "Stout aborre" (perch). Stout was the single adjective of encomium in his English vocabulary. I begged for



ABOVE THE RAPID.

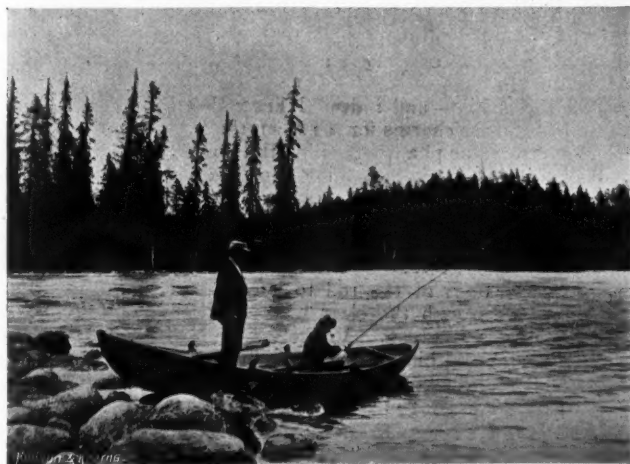
Swedish. No, he would talk English; he had been learning it; he had a stout hufvudvärk. How did we say that? I suggested headache. Yes; he had drunk much last night; he—but at last we were at the end of the lake. The low, woody shores closed in, forming a channel of quiet, shallowish water, gradually deepening and narrowing into a short rapid by which the stream went tumbling and foaming into the small lake beyond named Kilvejaur.

This channel was sheltered by the woods from such little wind as there was, so that the surface was almost like a mirror. The little Lapp, however, halfway down it drew the boat stealthily into the rocks at the side, and directed me to fish it from the land. I hesitated; it seemed absurd to try such water on such a day, but to humour the man I put on a light cast and three trout flies—a March Brown, Red Palmer, and Zulu—and cast lightly across. In a moment there was a big swirl on the glassy surface, but no touch. I cast again; another swirl, but again no tightening of the line. I cast a third time, and let the flies sink well; one more swirl, and I was fast in a fish. It bored down steadily to the bottom, then made a few short runs diagonally across the pool, but in a minute I had it within reach of the net and landed the first fish, a $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. grayling. Almost precisely in the same spot I was quickly fast in a second and a third grayling of the same size, all at the Red Palmer. A few yards further down, still in the same quiet water, I got a fourth of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., and then a much larger fish quietly sucked in the sunk flies. I played him a couple of minutes, but even as I was about to slip the net under him the fly came away. He was certainly not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ lb.—a rare size in these parts for grayling, which average usually about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.

Making my way from boulder to boulder along the stone-strewn bank, in shirt sleeves, groaning with the breathless heat, I picked up one grayling after another, till by the time I had

reached the swift stream at the head of the rapid I had a dozen and a-half in my bag. Here I put on a small spoon, but the water was difficult to work from the bank, so I retraced my steps to the boat, spun the quiet water without much success, getting only two little grayling, and then thoroughly worked the top of the rapid. A couple more grayling and three trout of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. each were the result.

Below the rapid there seemed to be a splendid pool. Would the little Lapp take the boat down, and could he ever get it up again? He raised not the slightest objection, and down we shot, stern foremost, at a giddy pace, plunging and straining,



A REST BELOW THE RAPID.

over the foaming waves. A turn of the oar, and we were in a quiet back-water at the foot of the rapid, whilst the swift stream tore madly past scarcely a yard from the boat.

It looked an excellent pool for salmon, if salmon had been able to ascend so far. Big trout, however, will often rise at a salmon fly, so I picked out a large double-hooked red and blue fly with turkey wings of my own tying, and cast over parts of the stream. For some time there was no response; then, as I was about to give it up in despair, there was a heavy plunge at the fly. I tried the fish again, but he refused to move. A change of fly, this time a Jock. But it was useless; he would not stir. The little Lapp was shaking his head wisely at me—he had no faith in flies for big trout—when suddenly, four or five yards below the place I had marked, there was a heavy pull, and my line tore hissing across the stream.

"Down, down," I waved to the man, who was foolishly making for the shore behind, whilst straight away from us



THE GLASSY WATER WHERE THE GRAYLING LAY.

dashed the fish, and my drowned line went bellying in a great curve, swept away by the swift water. "Down," I shouted, and not a moment too soon. Every second I expected the line to be cut on one of the big boulders that strewed the pool, or the fish to smash me with the heavy weight of water dragging against its hold. But no! As we shot down and across the eddying stream the line came tight and true again, and now I had my fish on equal terms. He had paused for a minute just on the edge of the swift water, in the safe shelter doubtless of some big stone. Slowly I dragged him down on a shortened line, checked his fierce efforts to dash again across the stream,

and then once, twice, three times he flung himself into the air, a bar of silver as bright as any fresh-run salmon. A few more frantic struggles, and his strength was spent; but how to gaff him was the question. The shore here was shallow, and fringed with big half-sunk boulders. To land was impossible. I dare not trust either rod or gaff to the excited Swede, and the Lapp was busy with the oars. At last, after edging away from the boat again and again, the fish came within reach, the little gaff was in his shoulder, and I dragged him into the boat. He was an 8lb. lake trout, a *salmo ferox*, beautiful in proportion, and glowing with silver scales.

The Lapp burst into a flood of astonished rapture. Could a little fly, which was only fit for grayling, kill such a fish? His faith was shaken. Never in his experience had he seen a "stor lax"—a big salmon, for the natives call all the large trout "lax," or salmon—caught on a fly; a bait was best—would I try one now?

To please him—and indeed I knew that he was right, but the fly has greater charms for me when the fish will come at it—I changed to a blue phantom, and with this we spun the top of the pool, without getting anything except a small trout of 1½lb. and a few grayling. I tried a brown phantom without more success, and at last a spoon. Near the tail of the pool, in the almost sluggish water under the bank, I had a heavy pull at this, but the fish lay still, scarcely moving a yard to right or left. As I brought the strain of the rod to bear, it slowly came towards me, and then through the clear water I saw a gleam of striped creamy yellow and green. A pike! There was not a moment to lose. I dragged him in hand over hand, but as I was about

to plunge the gaff into him the great evil jaws gave a last vicious snap, the gut was severed, and he sunk like a log to the bottom, bearing away my precious spoon. I had quite forgotten that there might be pike in the pool, and had been fishing with a treble gut trace tipped with a foot of single, for the water was exceedingly clear.

Warned by this disaster, I mounted a fine wire trace, but failed to move another fish of any size. A short row took us to the head of the river proper, which flows out from the end of this second lake. Here the grayling and small trout rose merrily to the fly, till as the afternoon drew on a thick, drizzling rain set in, and put them off the feed. The Lapp, single-handed, hauled the boat up the rapid by a rope placed at a cunning angle, and homewards we toiled across the now gloomy lake, while the thunder pealed around us, and the rain descended in torrents. Soaked through and through, we dragged home the catch of forty-eight smaller fish, of which ten were trout, weighing 42lb., and the one eight-pounder. The Lapp had flatly refused to be photographed, and quietly baffled my cunningest attempts to snap him; but he was delighted to squeeze the ball and take us when I showed him the way. So to the total day's bag were added a few not uninteresting photographs.

This bit of water, so far as I could learn, is rarely fished, though it is so near a large village. It certainly deserves a day or two, for it is well stocked, and had not the water been over-high and the weather unfavourable, I might easily have doubled my catch. It may safely be commended to the notice of any fisherman who is making his way up the valley to the great Skellefte lakes.

G. H. NALL.



A MODEL village built before the Wars of the Roses by a great noble and his lady, is not commonly seen. A visit to Ewelme in Oxfordshire shows that such an idea was quite in keeping with the feeling even of that ancient date. The only difference in the spirit of the benefactors was that religious motives played a rather larger part in their social benevolence. But in the main the idea present to them was much the same as that which prompts a great proprietor with a bountiful and kindly lady to beautify the village round their country seat, restore the church, start a school and village hospital, and better the condition of their people. To illustrate this side of later feudalism, and its survival in the England of to-day, we cannot do better than set out the story of the village of Ewelme and its embellishments and endowment by the Duke of Suffolk and his Duchess in the reign of Henry VI.

The village lies at the foot of the Chiltern Hills, not far from Dorchester. The persons who made it a model village just before the Wars of the Roses were William de la Pole, the first Duke of Suffolk, and his Duchess, Alice, the grandchild of Geoffrey Chaucer. The

Duke, as everyone knows, was for years the leading spirit in England during the early part of the reign of Henry VI., whose marriage with Margaret of Anjou he arranged in the hope of putting an end to the disastrous war with France. His murder in mid-Channel—when his relentless enemies followed him out to sea, took him from the ship in which he was going into exile, and beheaded him on the thwarts of an open boat—was the forerunner of the most ghastly chapters of blood and vengeance in civil feud ever known in this country. But the grace and dignity of his home life in his palace at Ewelme, with his Duchess to help him, are less well known, though the evidences of it remain little altered at the present day.

Of course there was a village there long before the Duke of Suffolk became possessed of it. It was such a perfect site that if any place in the country round were inhabited, Ewelme would have been first choice. The name has nothing to do with "elms." It was an old Saxon word, meaning a spring of water, or outflow of water. This flow of water is one of the most striking natural features and amenities of the place. It is a great natural spring, coming out from the chalk of the



H. W. Taunt.

THE KING'S POOL.

Copyright.

Chilterns, and forming immediately a lovely natural pool, under high tree-grown banks. This is still exactly as it was in the ancient days. No water company has robbed it, and besides THE KING'S POOL, which is the old name of the water, there are overflowing streams in every direction, now used in careful irrigation for the growth of water-cress, one of the prettiest of all forms of minor farming. Fertile land, shelter from gales by the overhanging hill, great trees, and abundance of ever-flowing water, are the natural commodities of the place. The old Latin name in ancient records is *Aquelma*. It was of some importance very early, for it gave its name to a Hundred. This hundred contains among other places Chalgrove, where Hampden received his death wound. Ewelme belonged to the Chaucer family. The last male heir was Thomas, son of Geoffrey Chaucer the poet, who left an only daughter, Alice, who was destined to become the greatest lady of her time. She married first the celebrated Earl of Salisbury, who was killed by a cannon shot while inspecting the defences of Orleans during the siege which Joan of Arc raised. William de la Pole, then Earl of Suffolk, was appointed commander of the English forces in the Earl of Salisbury's place, and not only succeeded to his office, but also married his Countess, who now became Countess of Suffolk. It was long before either the Earl or his Countess could revisit Ewelme, where the Earl must have had some property before his marriage, for his elder brother, Earl Michael, was buried at the public expense in the church of Ewelme after his death at Agincourt. For seventeen years the Earl never left the war in France; but when Henry VI. was grown up he arranged the marriage with Margaret of Anjou, and did his best to promote peace with France. At this time Suffolk was the most powerful subject in the kingdom. He was made a Marquis, and finally a Duke, and his Duchess was granted the livery of the Garter. In 1424 he built a palace at Ewelme, and in due course he rebuilt the church, founded a "hospital for thirteen poor men and two priests," and added to this a school. Palace, church, hospital, and school were all of the same period of architecture, and that the very best of its kind. Thus in the fifteenth century Ewelme was eminently a "one man" place, like most of the model villages of to-day. The palace was moated, and used as a prison as late as the Civil War. Margaret of Anjou was kept there in a kind of honourable confinement for a short time, for long after the Duke's murder the Duchess was in favour once more, in the triumph of the Yorkists, and Margaret, who had been her Queen and patroness, was given to her keeping as a prisoner both in her palace and later at Wallingford Castle. Henry VIII. spent his third honeymoon there, that with Jane Seymour, and Prince Rupert lived in it during the Civil War. Later, only the banqueting hall remained, which was converted into a manor house.

But if the palace is gone, the church remains as evidence of the magnificence of the Duke's ideas on the subject of a village place of worship. He seems to have shared the apprehension felt by the Duke in Disraeli's novel "Tancred," that he might be accused of "under-building his position." In design it is very like another large church which he had built at Wingfield in Suffolk, where his hereditary possessions lay, and where he was buried after his murder, his body having been given to his



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THE BRIDGE AND CRESS-BEDS.

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H. W. Taunt.

"GOD'S HOUSE."

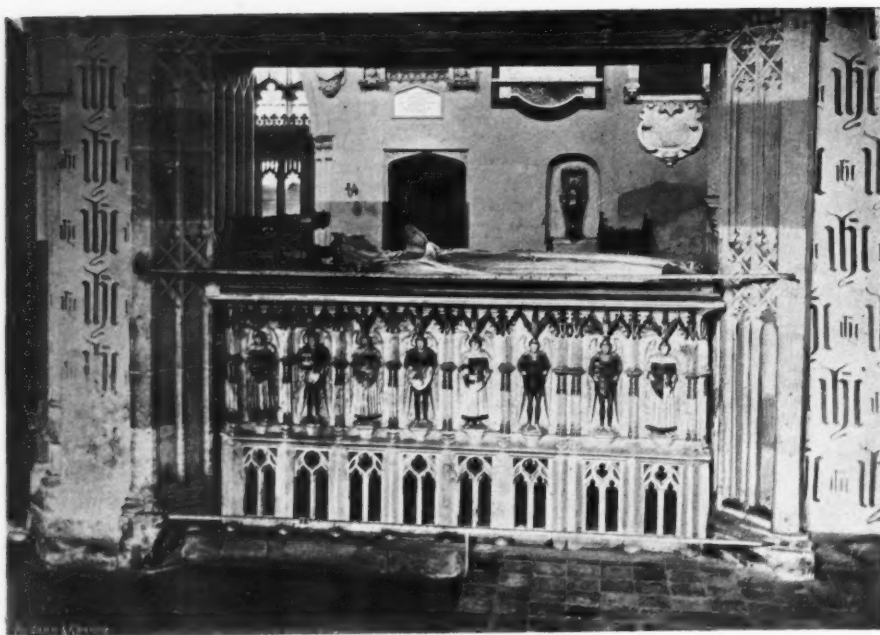
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INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH.

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THE TOMB OF THE DUCHESS.

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THE DUCHESS'S SCHOOL.

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EWELME CHURCH: THE SOUTH PORCH.

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widow. The same architect possibly supervised both; but of the two EWELME CHURCH is the finer. The interior is especially splendid, for in it are the tombs of the Chaucers, a marvel and document of heraldry—that seen nearest to the spectator in the view of the INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH, and the magnificent sepulchre of the Duchess herself, on which her emaciated figure lies wrapped in her shroud. This TOMB OF THE DUCHESS ALICE is one of the finest monuments of the kind in England.

The other relic of the prosperity of Ewelme under the De la Poles is the hospital and school they founded. "God's House" is the name now given to it, and it is kept in good repair and used as an almshouse. The inner court is surrounded by cloisters, and the whole is in exactly the same position as when it was built. The higher parts, constructed of brick, were the quarters of the priest and schoolmaster.

The ruin and subsequent murder of the Duke, who adorned and beautified this model village in the early fifteenth century, took place in 1450. Nearly all France was lost, and in the hopes of conciliating the enemy, Maine and Anjou were given up by Suffolk's advice. He was accused of "selling" the provinces, and a number of vague but damaging charges were drawn up against him on evidence which would not be listened to now in any court or parliament, except perhaps in a French State trial. Suffolk drew up a petition to the King, which shows among other things the drain which the French wars made on the lives and fortunes of the English nobles.

After referring to the "odious and horrible language that runneth through the land almost in every common mouth, sounding to my highest charge and most heaviest slander," he reminded the King that his father had died in the siege of Harfleur, and his eldest brother at Agincourt; that two other brothers were killed at the battle of Jargeau, where he himself had been taken prisoner and had to pay £20,000 ransom; that while his fourth brother was hostage for him he died in the enemy's hands; and that he had borne arms for the King's father and himself "thirty-four winters," and had "abided in the war in France seventeen years without ever seeing this land." The King's favour secured that he should be banished instead of losing his head, for a State trial was never anything better than a judicial murder. But his enemies chartered a large ship, boarded that on which the Duke was, and took him prisoner. The following is the letter written by an eye-witness to Sir John Paston, describing what happened:

"In the sight of all his men he was drawn out of the great ship into the boat, and there was an axe and a stock. And one of the lewdest men of the ship bade him lay down his head and he should be fairly ferd (dealt) with, and die on a sword. And he took a rusty sword and smote off his head with half-a-dozen strokes, and took away his gown of russet and his doublet of velvet mailed, and laid his body on the sands of Dover; and some say his head was set on a pole by it, and his men sit on the land by great circumstance and pray." The writer says "I have so washed this bill with sorrowful tears that uneths ye shall not read it."

The Countess survived his fall and lived to be great and powerful once more. Her son became the brother-in-law of Sovereigns, and her grand-children were princes and princesses.

Except for the loss of the palace, Ewelme is probably little altered since

those days. The houses, farms, and cottages are doubtless better built. But the natural and artificial beauties of the place are exceeded by few villages of the South Midlands of England.



THE idea of forming a private collection of living eagles and raptorial birds, such as that now at Mottisfont Abbey, and illustrated in the last number of COUNTRY LIFE, was original, and its success beyond expectation. But no description of the birds as they are seen to-day would be complete without some reference to the author of the undertaking. There is little doubt that when Dan Meinertzhagen died, we lost a mind almost perfectly equipped by Nature to make a mark amongst those best fitted both to learn and to set out in its most attractive forms the modern study of the life and history of birds. Without in the least exaggerating what he did, or mistaking promise for performance, we may, without hesitation, set down the names of Audubon, Wolf, and Seeborn as those with which what he had already begun, would, if maintained, have entitled him to rank in the future; Audubon, because his gift for painting and drawing birds was developed even earlier than it was in Audubon, and because he was also a first-class field naturalist; Wolf, because in painting birds his knowledge of their daily life and sense of colour and pictorial effect was of the same kind, and the results he had already produced were such as delighted that veteran animal painter himself of whom Landseer declared that "Before he was a man he must have been an osprey"; and Seeborn, because he had the same gift for original observation in new and distant regions.

The buzzard here shown, drawn in pen and ink, was one of the illustrations of an MS. monograph on birds of prey, begun when he was at Harrow. Other illustrations in this article are taken from the same book. The beautiful and minute hand-writing, portions of which are shown in one illustration, written on folio sheets, is striking enough in itself. The pages are without blot or erasure, written with the effortless precision which marked his pen and ink pictures. This power of accurate drawing was spontaneous and innate. When a small boy of eleven he copied Doyle's frontispiece of *Punch*, so accurately that it might be mistaken for the original leaf torn off; and in a scientific monograph on the owls, by Mr. W. P. Pycroft, just published by the Linnæan Society, will be found other examples of the same exquisite draughtsmanship, done in Professor Lankester's laboratories at Oxford. The incomplete history of the eagles and hawks contains many drawings as lifelike and as accurate as those here

... by Dr. Langsdorf from the Indian Shan from Asia. Second Yarkand Mission. R.B.B. 1.7 (1891) face of Mont Vilan (7800), in the Grisons. Specimens a fine case containing two birds which were killed

ubon Hotel, St. Moritz, 1891 near there; the 2 Austria. D.M.

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SPECIMEN OF DRAWING AND HAND-WRITING.



MADGE, BETSY, AND JACOB.

reproduced; and the sketches not finished betray no sign of the amateur, though begun when he was a boy.

His home at MOTTISFONT ABBEY made an ideal headquarters for his pursuits. The river Test, divided into two streams, with an intervening marsh, duck ground, and heronry, is full of wild birds and water-fowl, and there was ample scope for aviaries, and for experiments in keeping large birds free and wild about the



BURROWING OWLS.

place. The story of these makes a more direct appeal to most readers than the more serious side of his work; and the management of his birds, both in the aviaries and out of doors, was so clever and thorough that it has the intrinsic interest which can be claimed for any pursuit which is done "as well as it can be," especially when the difficulty of keeping these large carnivorous birds in health is realised. He had two big sea eagles, which were loose about the grounds for three months. They became almost too bold and tame. Though they made their headquarters at the house where they were fed, they made long flights up and down the river and water-meadows, fed on trout and other fish, and took toll of the chickens at the farm, and cats, whenever they found them. The chicken yard was not far from their aviary, outside which they were fed. The cats they picked up where they could. They even chased a prize pussy belonging to a lady who lived near; but this cat escaped. One of their oddest feats was that of robbing a gentleman who was fishing in the river near. He had just hooked a fine trout, and was extracting the fly from its mouth, when something like a dark cloud came over his head. It was one of the eagles, which swooped down on him, seized the trout, and flew off with the fish, the line, and the top joint of the rod. One of these eagles flew fifteen miles off, to Salisbury, where it was shot. The other was caught and put in the aviary. When loose the eagles roosted mainly in a great plane tree near the river. They would even threaten to attack small dogs, and there is little doubt that, had they had the chance of pouncing on them quietly, with no one near, they would have done so. One motive for confining the survivor was the fear that it might possibly attack small children.

Among other birds kept in these early days was a raven, named Jacob. This was among the most intelligent of all



MILKY EAGLE-OWLS.

the Mottisfont pets. It was passionately fond of its young master, and would sit on his shoulder and "coo" at him like a pigeon, follow him wherever he went, and (apparently) was jealous of other animals which he liked. It hated any dog he petted, and any other favoured birds. Among these was a kite, whose food Jacob always stole. They were then given separate meals on separate lawns, but Jacob saved his and stole the kite's. A long course of low diet reduced the kite's strength until he could not fly, when Jacob saw his opportunity. He seized the kite by the scruff of the neck, dragged him to the river-side, and drowned him. This was his only "avicide," but his death was a tragedy. He liked to go out shooting with his master, and one day accompanied him to a covert two miles off. There, towards evening, he was lost, and did not return that night. Next day he went into a village near, and seeing a woman in the road, hopped up, and began to pull at her dress, as was his custom when asking for food at Mottisfont. She was frightened, and called to a man near, who, with incredible stupidity and callousness, fetched a gun and shot the poor raven in the road. Dan Meinertzhagen had a pair of trained cormorants, which soon became ridiculously tame. There is a smooth turf slope from the lawn to the main drawing-room window. Up this the cormorants would walk, and were sometimes found, most unwelcome guests, sitting on the back of one of the drawing-room chairs. They soon cleared

off some of the stock of fish in that part of the stream which runs close under the Abbey.

These birds were mainly companions of the Harrow days. Mr. Bushell, his house master, allowed an aviary for a certain number of eagles to be constructed in his garden. But the perseverance with which he maintained his birds under all the



Hills and Saunders. SITTING FOR ITS PORTRAIT. Copyright

disadvantages of school life is remarkable. Here is his portrait as a boy, in his Harrow hat and coat, with his spotted eagle, the bird SITTING FOR ITS PORTRAIT quite obediently.

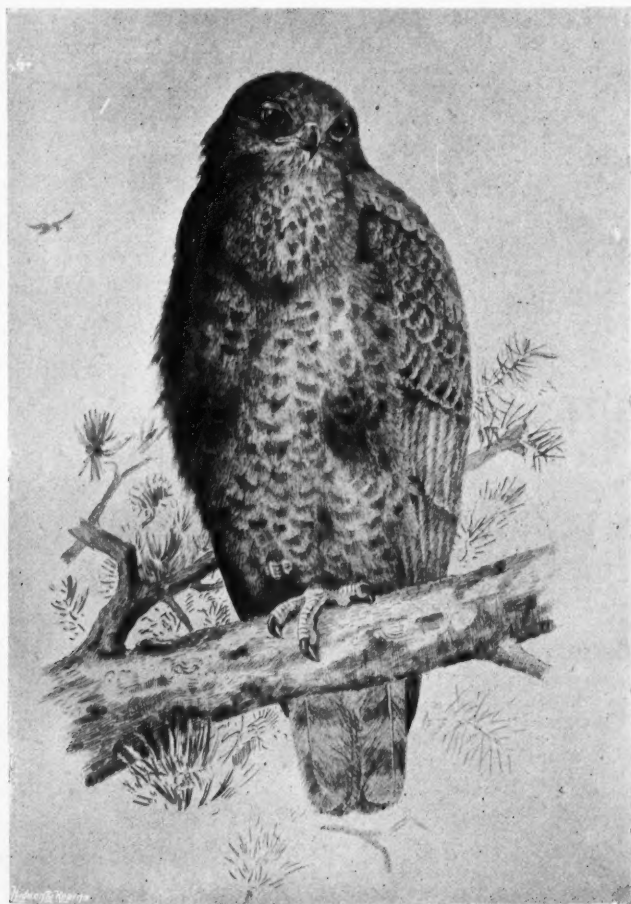
At Oxford life was different. He was able to give as much time to his pursuits as he wished, and had hosts of friends who were not only very devoted to him, but shared his pursuits. He studied those branches of science needed for his work at ornithology, in which his power of accurate drawing was of great service. The collection of owls, which supplements that of the eagles,

was largely made at this period, and increased until the date of his death. The MILKY EAGLE-OWLS from Benin were two out of three brought back after the Benin Expedition, which are the only specimens in Europe. Their lichen-coloured, grey plumage is set off by great black eyes and heavy eyelids, of what looks like russet leather, and gives them an air of extraordinary intelligence. They are perfectly tame and fearless, not moving even when strangers touch their cage. They only eat at night. There are BURROWING OWLS, which constantly make new holes. The set of eagle-owls, of which the Benin owls are African representatives, is made up by a splendid pair of European eagle-owls, taken from the nest on the rocks near Tromso, with cairngorm-coloured eyes, and exquisitely-marked VIRGINIAN EAGLE-OWLS. The plumage is all coloured horizontally, with dark grey on silver ground, and is exactly like the bark of the silver birch,



MOTTISFONT ABBEY.

Several other owls were from Finland, where their captor spent four happy months among the teeming bird life of the Arctic Circle. He travelled down the river Muonio (between Sweden and Finland) on the ice, and there, like Seeborn on the Petchora, awaited the break up of winter, and spent the summer among the birds. His collections of eggs are now being arranged at Mottisfont by his brother, Mr. Richard Meinertzhagen, and the accurate and interesting diary of his days—which his energy prolonged far into the sunny nights of the Finland summer—will, it is hoped, shortly be published. The following extract from a letter to a friend shows the enthusiasm which this contact with primitive Nature awakened: "We are succeeding beyond our wildest hopes," he wrote. "We have beaten—hollow in what we have done already; and June, *the* month, is still before us. Fancy living on trout, black game, willow grouse, and golden-eyes' eggs! It sounds lovely, does it not? The only thing to make it perfect would be some iced drinks, as the weather is frightfully hot, and there is no night to keep away the sun. The worst of it is, we don't know when to sleep. As far as I can make out, we are out for about thirty-six hours, and then sleep for twelve; but it seems to suit us. The birds are swarming here now. I found twenty-three nests yesterday, including eagle-owl, middle-spotted woodpecker, kestrel, rough-legged buzzard, widgeon, willow grouse, grey crow, Siberian jay, Siberian tit, and several others." He carried three young rough-legged buzzards, two hawk-owls, and six young woodpeckers in an improvised cage on his back, as well as his gun and cartridges, for some days over frozen mountains on his way home. The owls and buzzards arrived safely at Mottisfont, and are now in the collection.



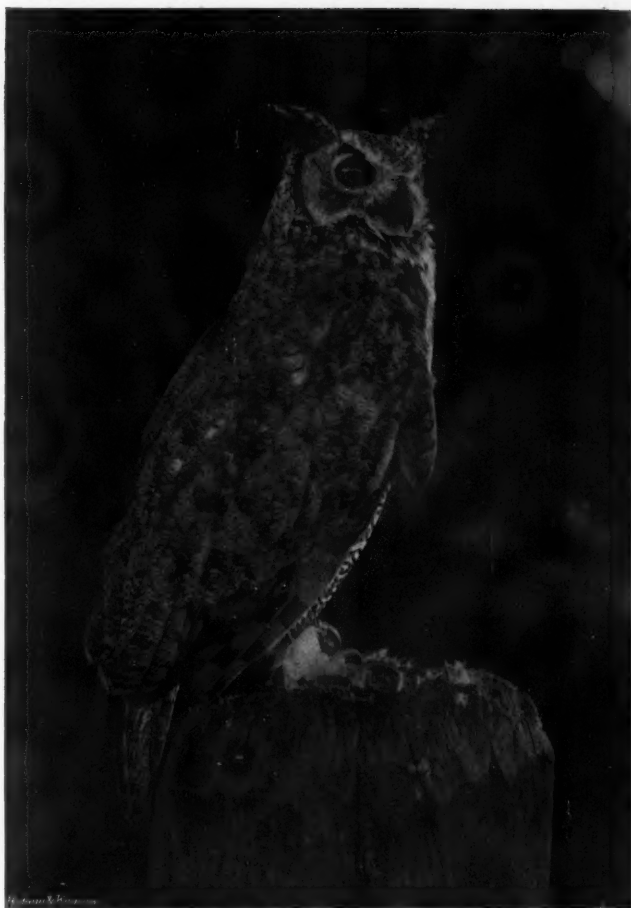
GYRFALCON.

Dan Meinertzhagen died in the following February, at Bremen, of that most deadly of all maladies to young adult life, internal inflammation, followed by peritonitis. His personal charm, which had endeared him to a host of friends at college, as elsewhere, augmented the general regret felt outside his family circle at his untimely death. Even on the river the flag of the New College barge was flown half-mast high on the day of his funeral.

C. J. CORNISH.

COUNTRY HUMOUR.

IT is frequently asserted, usually by the town writer, who is also very fond of asserting that there is no fun in Scotsmen, that the English country-bred lad or man has very little sense of humour, that he is unusually devoid of the broad shrewd mother wit which is to be found, for instance, in the Irish peasants, who, by the way, have a great deal more attributed to them in the way of frolicsome humour than they deserve, for your Irish peasant, as a rule, is a somewhat dull individual. But as a fact our average English rustic is not so



VIRGINIAN EAGLE-OWL.

dull as it has pleased many writers to paint him. Slow of tongue he may be, but his wit is frequently far quicker than his speech, as those who have lived much in the country have frequently found out to their cost when they have received a smart and unexpected retort from a dull son of the soil.

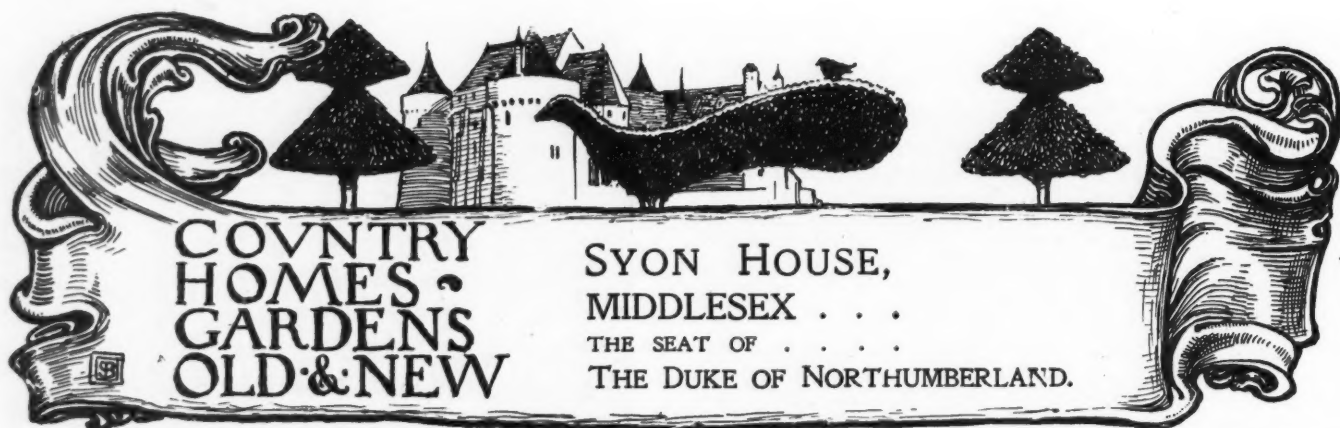
To give a few instances, it may be remarked that it was an old Sussex alewife who, on being asked by the Excise officers if she added "anything pernicious" to her liquors, indignantly replied that "the only 'nicious thing that goes into my barrels is the Exciseman's stick"; while it was a Somersetshire dame who, summoned to the Assizes, gave cautious answers when in the witness-box. As the counsel, by suggestions, tried to induce the old lady to give fuller details, she at last indignantly retorted, "Well, master, you do seem to know such a mortal sight more'n I 'bout it, that I thinks you'd better tell the gentles the whole story by yourself." It was a travelling pedlar who, calling at a cottage, enquired if the occupant could tell him of any road not much travelled by pedlars. "Yes," came the sharp answer, "there's one road pedlars never travel on, and that's the road to Heaven."

Two instances came under the writer's own experience some years back. Driving one dark night from London to Ewell, some few miles from the destination an enquiry was made of a passing rustic, "Jack, which is the way to Ewell?" "How did you know my name was Jack?" "Guessed it." "Then guess your way to Ewell," and away he stalked. The other instance occurred when a stable lad complained of the manner in which he was fed. His master was somewhat irascible, and shouted at the lad, "You young rascal, what do you mean; don't I keep a good table?" "Yes, sir, you keeps a good table, but you keeps nothing on it." It was an old field worker who, being greeted by a townsman with the remark that "You country folks sow the seed, and we Londoners profit by the crops," quietly replied, "Like enough you do, for I be a-sowing of hemp," which would immediately call up visions of an early morning interview with the Sheriff at Newgate. Although country humour is a very present quantity, it must be admitted that in the majority of instances it is very decidedly rude. Our old friend *Punch* records the existence of the "polite little boy" in a rural neighbourhood of which the inhabitants were so remarkable for their want of courtesy, that a lady, surprised at a rustic lad opening a gate for her, remarked, "You are such a polite little boy that you cannot be a native of Blankshire." "Thee bees a liar, for I are," was the unblushing retort. We think it was Miss Burney who told the same story, the scene of which she laid, if we remember aright, in Berkshire.

A lady once travelling over a ploughed field remarked to a labourer, "This is a very dirty path," when she was rewarded with the gruff retort, "If 'ees don't like it, nobody gart 'ee take it." Then again it was a rustic bridegroom who, when asked, "Wilt thou take this woman to be thy wedded wife?" replied, "What else do 'ee think I comed here for?" though the same story has been told of others besides country bumpkins, notably of London costermongers down Bethnal Green way. On another occasion, at a country wedding, the bride hesitated somewhat over the promise to "obey," whereupon the bridegroom remarked, "Go on, measter, it don't matter; I can make her."

The graveyards where the "rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep" often afford instances of much sly humour, the sculptures as well as the epitaphs being equally quaint and untruthful, though it must be acknowledged that country humour, if not always refined, is generally expressive. Many instances could be given, but as these have been so often treated by those who hunt for epitaphs and write thereon, we forbear, concluding our remarks by impressing upon the dwellers in towns that the inhabitant of the country is often not such a fool as he looks.

WILLIAM NORMAN BROWN.



A FEW days ago, in the beautiful St. Nicholas' Chapel of Westminster Abbey, the Duke of Northumberland, the proud owner of Alnwick Castle, Albury, and other domains, was laid to rest, and this unhappy occurrence will give increased interest to our illustrations and description of the historic gardens of Syon. The visitor rambling in the wilder parts of the Royal Gardens, Kew, can obtain glimpses at times of the stately formal mansion across the river, and at all seasons the solid pile wears the same cold, calm aspect, the lush meadows and velvety lawns throwing its sharp outlines into bold relief against the wooded background. No climbers garland the walls; the huge square stone building, with the famous lion brought from Northumberland House in London, is the central feature by the quiet river-side.

The late Duke in his lifetime gave Syon to his son, Earl Percy, and in the leafy grounds many sumptuous parties have taken place of recent years—a restful spot for gatherings in the

season, and a pleasant drive from town. It is not our purport here to trace the history of this noble house. Many interesting relics of the Percy family abound, and the mansion itself is filled with rare and costly treasures. Syon has an interesting past. King Henry V. founded a nunnery here in 1394, one of the most renowned in the kingdom, but the first, perhaps, to incur Henry VIII.'s displeasure—a fate which few religious houses escaped. To trace the ups and downs of Syon would require many pages. We shall rest content at present with a description of the gardens, and hope too that rumours of possible encroachments by the builder upon the surrounding parkland are false. A forest of houses hard by would destroy one of the most precious charms of this noble river-side retreat—its restfulness, disturbed only by the distant murmurings from Brentford town.

Beyond the spacious meadows that creep up to the spreading lawns is a paradise of trees and flowering shrubs, trees that have enticed to Syon visitors from many





"COUNTRY LIFE."

GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—SYON HOUSE: THE TERRACE BY THE RIVER.

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parts of the world interested in arboriculture, and specimens of foreign kinds without rival in these Isles. The dirty town of Brentford, adjoining this lordly domain, is not suggestive of a great and interesting garden in its immediate vicinity, but once within the gates peaceful scenery and the song of birds remove unpleasant thoughts. We are shut out from a crowded world, and in a garden of leafy walks, gay flowers, and noble trees.

The pleasure grounds are upwards of sixty acres in extent, and were laid out by the world-renowned landscape gardener, Capability Brown. As one can ascertain from the river path, Syon is as flat as the Royal Gardens of Kew. No hill or gentle undulating scenery breaks the monotony of a vast surface, over which on many an autumn and winter day mists from river and moist meadows hang like some fleecy cloud.

On every hand, however, something will arrest attention. The trees are magnificent, ash, beech, elm, and chestnut spreading their noble arms to cast shadows over the grass. Spacious lawns surround the house, and in the background, on either side, are bold sweeping shrubberies. During the past few years manifest improvement has taken place; overgrown shrubberies have been thinned out and much unnecessary undergrowth of common things swept away. This is especially noticeable by the lakeside, the winding path now giving views of the garden beyond, and the noble specimen trees are permitted to reveal their beauty of form and colour.

The rule in recent plantings has been to form the shrubs into groups to allow each family to display its characteristic features.



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THE HOUSE FROM THE PARK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

mentioned in COUNTRY LIFE, few shrubs are more precious than the winter-flowering *Chimonanthus*.

The black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), the dainty Chinese crab, allspice tree (*Calycanthus floridus*), snowdrop tree (*Halesia tetraetara*), cork oak, American liquidambar, over 80ft. in height, tulip and Kentucky coffee trees, and evergreen oaks will interest

It is impossible to mention every valuable tree at Syon. Trees of many kinds will attract attention—here a noble cedar of Lebanon, its great branches showing darkly against the sky, there the pretty snowy *Mespilus* (*Amelanchier*), and in spring an old Judas tree (*Cercis*) shows its purple flowers, a glimmer of rich colour against browns and greens. On an old weather-beaten wall the winter sweet (*Chimonanthus*) scents the air with a pleasant odour, diffused from its yellow-tinted flowers.

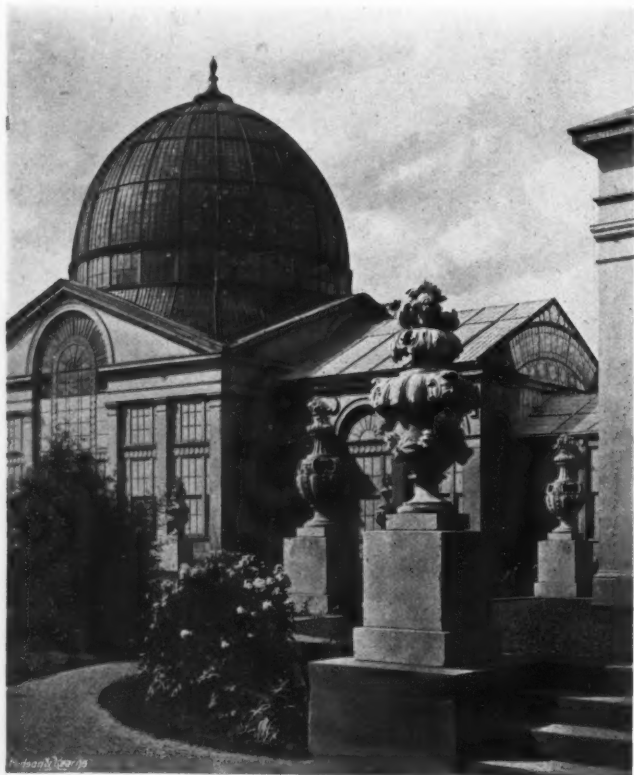
As previously



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THE FLORA COLUMN.

"C.L."



Copyright

THE LARGE CONSERVATORY.

"C.L."

all who love British gardening. More remarkable than any tree mentioned is the great specimen of deciduous cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). This is probably the finest tree in Europe, and is upwards of 100ft. high, with a circumference of 12ft. to 15ft. A characteristic feature of this tree is its root knobs or knees, which protrude from a few inches to 2ft. in height above the soil. They present a weird, uncanny look, and may be distinctly seen from a distance, cropping up in the vicinity of the tree, which enjoys the moist soil of the lakeside.

The views are varied and pretty, from the creeper-covered bridge across the lake to the Flora column. We may see the splendid yellow-berried holly and rejoice in roses and creepers hanging their garlands of flowers from the tree branches to fill the garden with colour and perfume the air.

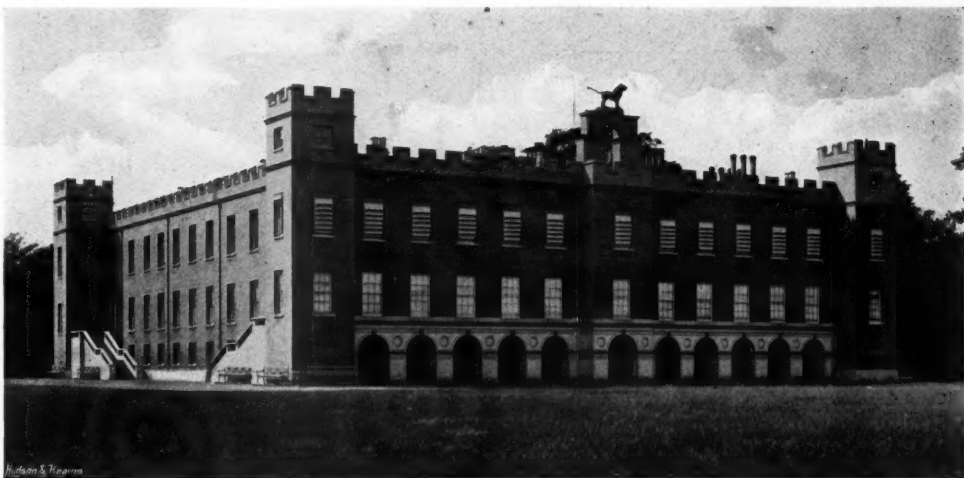
An interesting tree, which, truth to tell, is approached with

a feeling something akin to reverence, is the aged mulberry, probably the oldest specimen in England, and planted here on its introduction from Persia in 1548. There is no reason to doubt that the monks of the monastery gathered its juicy fruits, and sought in summer days its grateful shade. We love the mulberry for its picturesqueness, its "leafiness," and pleasant fruit, which must be gathered from the tree for its peculiar flavour to be enjoyed. May this venerable tree long remain to add to the charm of Syon.

The flower garden faces the conservatory, and seems cut off from the pleasure grounds. It is surrounded by banks of shrubs, a pleasant retired spot where in the summer months masses of colour relieve the surrounding foliage. When spring flowers are in bloom, a scene of exquisite beauty is unfolded in this quiet garden. It is the time of the blossoming of the Yulan (*Magnolia conspicua*), the beautiful tree introduced from sunny Japan by Fortune. The specimens here are amongst the most valuable in the kingdom, and, ere the frosts have gone, the leafless branches are covered with large fragrant white flowers, so soft and white that in the evening a snow-shower seems to have enveloped every twig. Not many yards away is the variety with purple stains on its petals, this flowering later than the true Yulan. We were pleased to see a collection of tea roses, planted in a border by the side of the conservatory, and are gratified to know that this queenly family, so hardy, free, and charming in both flower and leaf-colouring, is yearly growing in public favour.

The conservatory, or winter garden, as the spacious structure can more truthfully be described, is one of the finest in the kingdom. Quite recently nearly £2,000 have been expended upon it, and the noble interior has been considerably altered, the divisions in the wings having been removed to create walks amongst luxuriant palms and ferns. The building is in the form of a crescent, and has a length of 380ft. It is of Bath stone, and has wings, the central division measuring 100ft. in length, surmounted with a dome 65ft. in height. It would be impossible within the scope of a single article to mention every interesting plant in this house. Splendid tropical palms and ferns fill bold beds, interspersed with heat-loving flowers, whilst vigorous climbers run riot over the iron supports. Not a few of the palms have been lowered to prevent their escape through the glass roof. Pine, cyprus, and tree-fern greet the eye, here a *Corypha australis*, sheltering on its stem the delicious tropical fruit (*Monstera deliciosa*); there a date palm, upwards of 60ft. high, spreads out its great leaves, and elsewhere such plants or trees, whichever one is pleased to christen them, as the Caffir bread tree of South Africa (*Eucephalotos Caffra*), allspice tree (*Eugenia pimenta*), olive wood tree, and Bengal fig show vigorous growth.

The houses contain many



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FRONT VIEW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE LAKE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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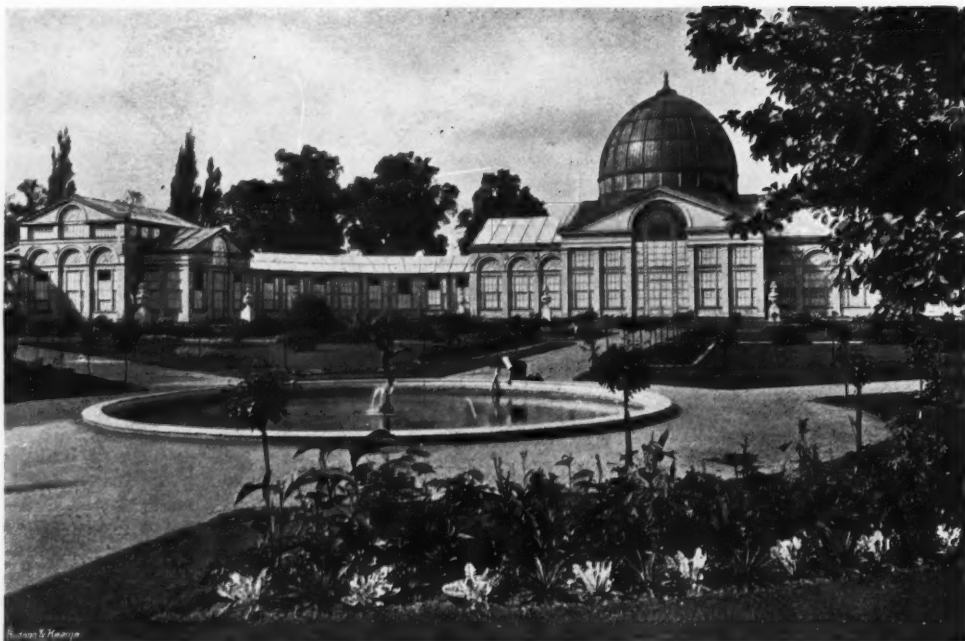
THE GRINLING GIBBONS' VASES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

interesting plants, in some cases almost unique. The vanilla has been grown here for many years, and is interesting for its commercial value, the plant supplying the vanilla appreciated as a flavouring to various condiments. It is an orchid, rambling in growth, and one of the few species that yields an article of any economic importance. A vigorous specimen occupying much wall space may be seen in a stove house, the bunches of white flowers in due season producing the long chocolate-coloured pods that confectioners esteem.

For generations bananas have received great attention, and in few English gardens is this now popular fruit so well grown. Needless to relate, the fruits gathered from the home-grown plants possess rich and delicate flavour and deep colouring.

These gardens are famous throughout the world, not only for the beauty of tree life or their historic interest, but for the thorough way in which everything is performed. They may be visited with interest at almost any season of the year. When grey mists overhang the woodland, and the flowers have flown, there is little perhaps to charm until the spacious plant houses, filled with rare treasures, are entered; but in the spring and summer days Syon is a blessed retreat, a leafy abode, gladdened by flowers, until, in the cool October days, the brilliant colouring of fading foliage portends the



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THE FLOWER GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

time of fogs. And fogs are not unknown in this valley garden. During many days in some years a heavy pall of smoke and mist will overhang the "gas" town, destroying tender flowers under glass, and injuring vegetation generally. Horticulture, however, in the face of this enemy, is practised in a modern and successful way.

WHERE IS EXMOOR?

AMONG the places that are not so well known as they might be is that wild tract of moorland that we have all read of in the pages of "Lorna Doone," but which comparatively few of us have thought of really penetrating. For Lynton is not Exmoor, neither is Minehead, though both are near. Nor is Porlock, most delightful of villages, quite Exmoor either, in spite of its intimate connection with the land of the wild red deer—their last land, by the way, in Merry England. No; Exmoor lies further afield, behind the "sullen swell of Dunkery," behind the woods of Culbone, behind the hills of THE LYN with their break-neck carriage roads, well

described by Southey as of "serpentine perpendicularity." Most people imagine that Exmoor is in Devonshire. As a matter of fact, the greater part of it is in the county of Somerset. Only about three or four miles of its western and southern portions lie within the boundaries of the county first named; the remainder, some fifteen square miles or so, belong most distinctly to Somerset. Influenced partly perhaps by the popular opinion that if Exmoor did not belong to their county it ought to, the Devonshire authorities have recently made an attempt to get the parish of Exmoor transferred to them. But the men of Somerset would not be persuaded. Devon, said they, was large enough already. Let it be content with its Dartmoor, and leave the sister moorland to the sister county.

One may reach Exmoor—or the borders thereof—nowadays in many ways. From the "centre of civilisation" the most direct route is *via* Taunton, over the branch line to Minehead. The first real glimpse of the moor is obtained just as the train reaches Dunster Station, and a more magnificent introduction could no one have. In the foreground, rising above level meadows of lush hay-grass, the grey towers of the Castle of the Luttrells crown a wooded knoll. To the right heaves up the dark mass of Grabhurst, to the left the purple ridge of Croydon. Between them, rising high above the deep timbered valley of Avill, a huge blunt-headed hill fills in the distance. This is Dunkery Beacon, the highest land of Exmoor, in girth twelve miles, in height more than 1,700ft.

Exmoor may also be approached by the Devon and Somerset line, again starting from Taunton, but Dulverton is a long way off, except for hunting-men, and the other



Cathedral and Pritchard.

CASTLE ROCK, LYNTON.

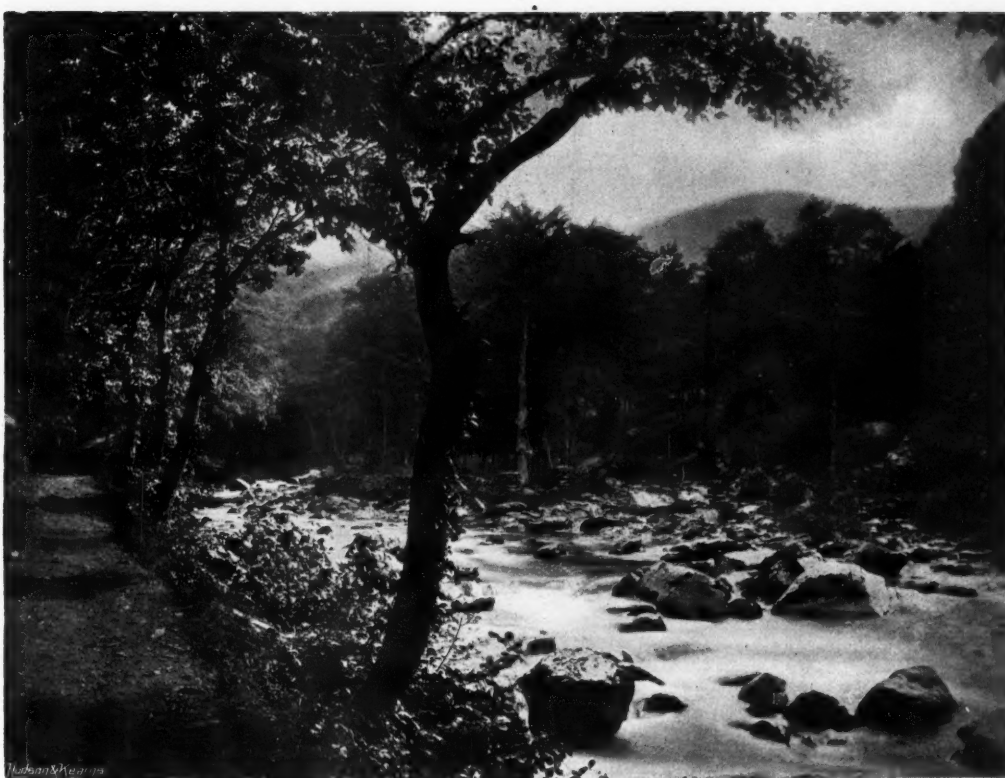
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stations have no facilities for getting upon the moor. It is better for the ordinary visitor to continue his journey to Barnstaple (which he may also reach by the South-Western line), and climb out to Lynton by the light railway opened but a few months since. But the favourite approach is undoubtedly by way of Minehead.

And this for more reasons than one. Not only is the railway journey the more picturesque, but Minehead lies on the very verge of, perhaps, the finest scenery on Exmoor. Nor is it in itself unattractive. There is too much sand and silt perhaps at low tide, and the colour of the Bristol Channel *might* be more cerulean; but the North Hill at the back of the little watering-place is fine, and of the moor moory, and the views over upland and lowland bare mountain and wooded combe of their kind unsurpassed. There are good hotels, too, where the tourist may rest and be thankful if he arrive, which he possibly may, too late to proceed further moorwards. For Minehead is a terminus, and west of the same the horse of iron must be exchanged for the horse of flesh, and the stuffy railway carriage for the breezy coach.

The very names of these coaches smack of romance. There is the Red Deer, which recalls poor Richard Jefferies, the Katerfelto, a name familiar to admirers of Whyte-Melville, and there is, of course, a Lorna Doone. And smart, well-horsed vehicles they are, as they needs must be, with hills like the roof of a house to negotiate.

Anent these hills there is undoubtedly much unreasoning terror. Porlock Hill is bad, I admit, nor is the drop into Lynmouth—either way—calculated to soothe the nerves of the neurotic; but they can always be walked. Still, there be some people who will not be convinced. Of such is a friend, an eminent artist well known in the West. I once tried to induce him to cross Exmoor on a coach. He would have none of it. I pointed out that an accident was of rarest occurrence.



Catheral and Pritchard.

THE LYN.

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"Accident!" said he. "Accident! Nothing's an accident on Exmoor *unless somebody's killed!*"

Nevertheless, we have sufficient confidence in the local Jehus to board one of these coaches, hoping that whatever happens it will not be an "accident." Out of Minehead it rolls, the guard treating the public generally to a blast or two on his horn. Everybody blows a horn in this part of the world, and blows it very well. For this is a land of mighty hunters, not only stag-hunters, but fox-hunters, while harriers are not unknown, and there is some suspicion even of beagles. Minehead left behind, the coach winds up a delightful valley between the North Hill and Grabhurst, passing close to the old house where Judge Bracton is said to have been born 600 years ago, and where his "study" is still shown high up in the gateway gable. From the top of a hill the beautiful vale of Porlock opens suddenly beneath us, with Dunkery towering above, and a glorious range of downs rolling away seaward. Those wooded coverts of Horner immediately beneath the moors are a favourite resort of the red deer, and that hill under Dunkery is Cloutsham Ball, famous in stag-hunting annals, for here takes place the opening meet of the Devon and Somerset, as much an annual outing for West Somerset as the Grasmere sports are for Westmoreland.

Stag-hunting commences about the middle of August and lasts till towards the end of October. Then the hinds—the lady deer—have *their* turn, and are hunted for five months more. It is roughish work. Exmoor is no "good level grass country with easy fences," the heaven of a hunting friend of mine, but a rough mountain tract cut by deep combes. Here it is parlous cold in winter, and very often parlous damp too, while in autumn the heat, in the deep valleys especially, is simply intense.

Our Exmoor friends know all this, and dress accordingly. The pink coat and top hat are little affected except by hunt officials. In short, these Nimrods wear pretty much



Catheral and Pritchard.

RUINS OF DOONE HUTS, DOONE VALLEY.

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Cathal and Pritchard.

MALMSMEAD BRIDGE.

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what they like. I have seen a man in rough tweed and his shirt sleeves.

But here we are at Porlock, and the coach pulls up at the Ship Inn, where Southey had his pet chimney corner (with a convenient window "handy" in the chimney breast), and where he wrote all sorts of verse grown unfashionable nowadays, but still pretty enough to those who know the scenery. The Ship lies at the very end of the village, so that to reach it we have to pass up the whole length of winding street with its quaint thatched cottages all washed a dazzling white, its ancient church with truncated spire, and, alas! its new and dreadfully modern Lorna Doone Hotel. The situation is ideal. In front, bounding a green plain dotted with elms, lies the sea. At the back, sweeping round in a magnificent amphitheatre, is the moor. To the right Hurstone Point thrusts its rocky base into the breakers; to the left the dense woods of Ashley Combe clothe the precipitous bluffs almost to the water's edge. Up in these woods, by the way, on a platform in the cliffs halfway between sea and moor, nestles the smallest church in England, to wit, Culbone. There be some who hold that there is a church still more toylike in the Isle of Wight, but we men of Somerset will have none of it. The church only measures 33ft. by 12ft., but yet is complete, with nave, chancel, screen, font, and even porch. It also boasts a spire covered in with slate, and quaint exceedingly.

At the Ship, or a little beyond it, the merciful man who regardeth the life of his (or any other man's) beast will descend and walk up a mile or so of Porlock Hill. For the road across the moor is 1,000ft. nearer heaven than the road through Porlock Vale, and was engineered at a time when stage coaches were not. Frequent pauses therefore will be necessary "to admire the view," and the view is certainly admirable. From the summit in particular an extent of country is visible greater than that from any other point in the West, Dunkery alone excepted. The Channel right under foot can be traced nearly to Bristol—I have often seen the smoke of Cardiff. The whole range of the Quantocks lies across the eastern horizon; the northern is broken by the rugged hills of Wales. All around is the moor, a great rolling wilderness of grass and gorse and heather blotted with cloud shadows, brooded over by the spirit of silence. To the left, across the valley-heads of Hawkcombe and Lucott, Dunkery upheaves, its great cairn prominent against the sky, the cairn whereon "them Dooneses," as the people to this day call them, lit the beacon fire to guide them to their lair, the cairn that 100 years before had borne the "ghastly war flame" to warn the "by-dwellers" of the Armada.

Three miles further on we look down into the Oare Valley, and as the coach nears County Gate, the boundary gate between Somerset and Devon, the driver points with his whip to a grove of trees far in the depths below, from which a grey tower just peeps, and says laconically, "Oare Church." Yes, that is the church where Lorna was married, and close by it a keen eye may see the homestead where John lived his honest life and lived

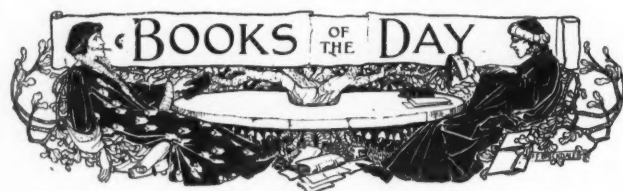
it pretty happily, considering that for many a year he went in constant fear of the Doones. For the Doone Valley is not far off, though you cannot see it, in spite of the assertion of Jehu to the contrary. The combe he points out is the valley of the Badgworthy Water, with which the robbers had nothing to do, dwelling in a side valley opening into it from the west. This Badgworthy Valley is watered by a fine stream, a notable place for trout, as any tourist may discover who arrives at the inn at MALMSMEAD BRIDGE in the fishing season and about the hour of 7 p.m. Then will his nostrils be assailed by odour most grateful—that of the speckled beauties yielding forth their fragrance—from the frying-pan.

Just below Malmsmead the Badgworthy Water enters the Lyn, and we on the coach may almost see the meeting, so directly above the gorge does the road run. It is a lovely stream, this Lyn; every yard of it from Oare to Lynmouth is full of beauty—and of trout. But the coach sweeps away from it presently and begins to drop, at first gradually,

then—well, *otherwise*, to the valley mouth. This Countisbury Hill, so named from the bleak village at the summit where we leave the moor, is trying to the nerves of any but a West Countryman. As we pass down it, with one hand grasping the back of the seat in front, the other that on which we sit, or *slide*, the coachman remarks cheerfully, "This is where the off wheel of the Red Deer come off back along." It was lucky that it *was* the off wheel, for the near one skirts a low bank about 4ft. high, and 400ft. or so below is the sea. As the coach grinds heavily down into Lynmouth we wonder what sort of an "accident" would have resulted had the vehicle lurched against this bank instead of against the solid hillside towering hundreds of feet above.

To Exmoor the scenery about the twin towns—or villages—of Lynton and Lynmouth makes a grand finale. The Lyn forces its way seaward between great hills, beneath rocky scarps. The last of the range is Hollarday Hill, behind which stretches the far-famed Valley of Rocks, with its Ragged Jack, its Castle, and its Cheese Wring—the last a grotesque pile beneath which dwelt Mother Meldrum, the witch to whom John Ridd went to know when he might again see his Lorna. Lynton is dropped as it were in a dip high on the hillside. Lynmouth, most picturesque of ports, lies along the base. The twin towns are to the western verge of the moor what Minehead is to the eastern—the gates. But, as I said at the beginning, neither is Exmoor. It must be sought for between them.

JOHN LL. WARDEN PAGE.



MR. QUILTER'S "PIED PIPER."

OF a very truth this is an age of astounding contrasts, of feverish haste and industrious leisure. But a short time ago it fell to me to expatiate upon the virtues and to raise a reproving finger over the defects of a book which might fairly be described as produced with lightning speed. The manuscript had absolutely been transmitted by telegraph from the recent seat of war, and the printers, using contrivances which would have made Caxton or the old man of Antwerp shiver, had almost rivalled the electric current in rapidity. Now there lies at my left hand a book upon which a man of art and letters and his wife have spent care, loving, unwearying, and prolonged as ever was spent by cloistered monk on mediæval missal before the printing press was so much as dreamed of in Europe. It is "The Pied Piper of Hamelin, A Child's Story by Robert Browning, Set forth in a series of Designs and Decorative Borders by Harry Quilter," and "Written in Ornamental Text by Mary his Wife"; and the publisher, for every book must have a publisher, is none other than Mr. Harry Quilter. Of the infinite beauty and variety of the designs, it is incumbent on the writer to say something; and he shrinks from the task, for it is overwhelming.

Nay, he would avoid it altogether had not Mr. Quilter, with kind expressions appreciative of the manner in which pictures are reproduced in COUNTRY LIFE, permitted a specimen page to be reproduced as a complement to this review. That simplifies the matter not a little; but it must be remembered that the picture is a specimen, a sample, and no more. It gives a clear idea of the artistic care which has been bestowed upon a single point, it can convey no idea of the variety and the wealth of fancy which has been expended upon the whole. Upon no poem in the English language could this tender care have been bestowed more worthily than upon the "Pied Piper."

"This child's story, written by a great poet for the son of a famous actor"—that is a sentence in the Dedication which fastens itself upon the mind at once. The best children's stories in prose and verse have had similar origin. They were written or brought into existence by their authors with the set purpose of pleasing some children or some child known to the author. Thus "The Rose and the Ring" grew out of pictures which Thackeray painted to delight his children in Rome, and "Alice"

was the fruit of the magician Lewis Carroll's desire to give pleasure to a dearly-loved daughter of the Dean of Christ Church. Such stories, written by gifted men, have a double measure of success. They are appreciated by the children, who are the most candid of folk, and, in their way, the most shrewdly critical in the world. They appeal also to another audience, whom Mr. Quilter addresses thus: "To those other children, dear comrades of mine, who retain in after years some memory of childhood's enchanted land, this book is offered by one who feels very certain that its deficiencies will meet excuse if only it serves to recall the vanished dreams and the whispering voices of long ago." Nor, when you look back at the familiar verses which were among the few bright spots in the dreary "Poetry Book" of boyhood's days, is the explanation of the essential charm of these stories far to seek in "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." It has every virtue which appeals to childhood and to mature age alike. The verse is quick and gay; it runs like a rippling brook. The poet dashes, without invocation or introduction, straight off into his story. The story itself has a savour of the old world and a fragrance of the age of miracles; yet at the same time it is marked by a profound knowledge of human nature. It has comedy and tragedy in it, it awakens laughter, yet it touches the heart-strings, it is full of episode, it is by no means deficient in gentle satire, it has a score of descriptive passages which cut a picture on the mind as sharp in its lines as that which the engraver's tool cuts upon the copper plate. For rapidity of action, read the whole poem, unless, as is very likely the case, you can say it by heart. For descriptive power take—

"They fought the dogs and killed the cats
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats."

For satire take the passage where the Piper claims his guerdon.

"A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue,
So did the corporation too.
For Council dinners made rare havock,
With claret, Moselle, Vin-de-grave, Hock."

For pathos you shall find nothing to equal the lament of the lame boy who was left behind when his playmates entered the joyous land, and for pure beauty his rendering of the Piper's melody is unsurpassable.

In illustrating a poem endowed with such prodigal wealth of imagery the



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[From "The Pied Piper of Hamelin."]

artist's work has been, in one sense, easy. He has suffered from no lack of subjects. The "River-side at Hamelin," the "Gossips Interrupted by the Rats," the "Mayor's Perplexity," the "Piper as men saw him and as Nature saw him," the "Rejoicings in Hamelin"—these and other subjects, to the number of twenty-five in all, are illustrated beautifully, fancifully, and with exact art. Particularly admirable is the expression of disgust and fright on the faces of the women as they draw back their skirts from the rats. The Piper's face is beautiful—there is no other word for it. Very funny too is the a tenuous rat dancing to the tune like a jerboa as the Piper begins. Then the picture of the joys which the music raised in the imagination of the one rat who survived is very fine. Look again at the dinner at Bagdat; the Oriental figures, the peacock fans, the Piper with his hubble-bubble, the veiled women. The beginning too of the leading away of the children, the lame boy hopping along merrily among the first three and holding the Piper's hand, is full of fascination; and best of all, perhaps, is the "Pied Piper's Street."

But this is not merely an illustrated book, although as such alone it would be entitled to high praise. Each picture has a frame, a border full of thoughtful fancy. I take one only, the last-named, by way of laying emphasis on the elaboration with which the scheme is worked out. On the page facing "Pied Piper's Street," and covering precisely the same space as the picture itself, is a fine reproduction of Mrs. Quilter's ornamental text; and in it mention is made of the lawyers dating "their records duly." The border shows monkish lawyers at work, and shelves of law-books, and a coffer filled high with deeds, dated 1376. But the Roman characters are as in a looking-glass, and the lawyers are writing with their left hands. The same design, the right way round, is repeated round the picture. To every picture there is a fresh border, and the variety of these borders is infinite and delightful. From them I would select, for particular mention, the "Music of Pan," the galaxy of turtles round the figure of the perplexed Mayor, and many quaint and exquisite arabesques. Altogether, this may be described as a book which is a joy for ever, an entirely unexpected delight in an age of hurry. It is pleasant to be able to add that the Queen has been graciously pleased to accept copies of both the folio and miniature editions of this beautiful work, that Her Majesty has expressed her appreciation and thanks, and that she especially likes the bindings, which were designed by Mr. Quilter.



A ROSERY.

WE dislike the name Rosery. It savours too much of the place in the older gardens of England in which alone it was considered correct to plant the queenly flower, and this Rosery usually consisted of ugly iron poles, arranged in some fantastic way, over which the Roses were to fling their odorous burdens. The Rosery at Ashridge is not a mildewed spot, indeed, unlike the old style, for, as our illustration shows, the flowers are richly massed and no ugly standards point their gaunt stems to the sky. We have hastened more than once from the stereotyped Rosery to the open garden, but happily English gardening is different nowadays. The Rose is brought into the pleasure grounds, the beautiful tea-scented race providing richer material of late years. Many happy days have been passed by the writer in autumn,

when to gather the Roses in the flower-beds near the house was a keen delight. Tea Roses should be overwhelmed then with their delicate flowers, dew-spangled perhaps by September mists, which vanish as the sun breaks through the fleecy veil, but they are sweeter and fresher for this cool vapour bath. We have had a splendid season for Rose planting, and the weather at the time of writing is sufficiently favourable to proceed with the work. There is no need to wait until spring whilst such weather continues. Never forget that the rule is to purchase, if possible, own root plants, as they are of course upon no foster-stock, which sometimes asserts itself with unpleasant results.



J. T. Newman.

THE ROSERY AT ASHRIDGE.

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WALL PLANTS—FLOWERING AND OTHERWISE.

One of the most pleasant features of the modern garden is the terrace or garden wall, now usually clothed with shrubs of distinct beauty, frequently those which only succeed in such positions as indicated. We know that a bare wall is as interesting generally as a gravel path, and the writer has seen many a fair place spoilt by neglect of the charming shrubs which would luxuriate in warm sunny sites and perfume too the winter air. This is a more important topic than many would have us think. And to neglect wall shrubs is to deprive the garden of some of its fairest flowers. We are not considering, of course, fruit trees, though if one looked in not a few gardens, positions are available for Peach, Nectarine, Cherry, or the luscious Jargonelle Pear, a juicy fruit on a July day, when gathered from the tree. One can often enjoy the true flavour of a fruit only when it is eaten as picked.

THE SHRUBS TO PLANT AGAINST WALLS.

Fairest of all wall plants are the Roses Gloire de Dijon, Bouquet d'Or, W. A. Richardson, Mme. Berard, and others of that vigorous class; but of these we have already written. Everyone knows, or should do so, that the most queenly of all flowers, whether garlanding an old wall or filling a bed upon the lawn, is the Rose. We enjoy the lilac trails of *Wistaria sinensis* in the early summer, the dense leafage of the *Cotoneaster*, or the sombre green and orange-scarlet fruit clusters of the *Fiery Thorn* (*Crataegus Pyracantha*), the handsome *Cydonia Maulei*, and the fragrant *Winter Sweet* (*Chimonanthus fragrans grandiflorus*). Where bush plants are unhappy in the open ground, then adorn the walls with their beautiful growth, and in this way the Mexican Orange-flower (*Choisya ternata*) is frequently used. The Lemon plant, or Sweet-scented *Verbena* (*Aloysia citriodora*), is seldom happy away from the shelter of a wall, but it is worth this position. Its soft green leaves are delightfully fragrant. Besides *Virginian Creepers*, *Clematises*, *Ivies*, *Honeysuckles*, *Jasmines*, *Convolvuluses*, and things as common, the following may be grown, and will give pleasure throughout the year, either because of their deep green handsome leaves or their flowers:

- Abutilon vitifolium*, a tender wall plant with large bluish flowers.
- Ake. ia quinata*.
- Aloysia citriodora*; its perfumed leaves are welcome for cutting.
- Aristolochia Siphon*, or the Dutchman's Pipe.
- Azara microphylla*, a glossy deep green shrub.
- Berberis*. *Bignonia radicans major*.
- Calystegia pubescens fl.-pl.* *Camellias*.
- Ceanothus azureus*, *Gloire de Versailles*, and others. In very hard winters they must be matted over until spring.
- Chimonanthus fragrans grandiflorus*, or the *Winter Sweet*.
- Diplopappus chrysophyllus*.
- Eccremocarpus scaber*. Never happy away from a warm wall.
- Fuchsia Riccartoni*, *Globose*, and others.
- Indigofera floribunda* and the white variety.
- Kerria japonica fl.-pl.*, the double orange Jew's Mallow.
- Lophospermum scandens*. *Maurandya Barclayana*.
- Magnolias*, particularly *M. grandiflora*.
- Menispermum canadense*, the Moon-flower.
- Periploca graeca*. *Piptanthus nepalensis*. *Pomegranate*.
- Loquat*, a very handsome shrub for its leaf. *Viburnum macrocephalum*.
- Choisya ternata*, the Mexican Orange-flower.

All or any of these may be chosen, surely an infinitely more interesting variety than the almost tiresome repetition of a few conventional climbers. Much as we love the *Ivy*, the *Ampelopsis*, the *Vine*, or even the *Rose*, we care for other climbers too.

DAFFODILS IN POTS.

This may appear a common-place note, but a houseful of Daffodils in pots at this time is a pleasant picture. There is a distinct freshness and charm about the flower; it brings spring to us, and the bulbs are very easily grown—few more so. We seldom fail, even with varieties of reputed fickle behaviour. How charming is a potful of the neat little *Tenby Daffodil* at this season, or the bolder trumpet kinds—*Ard Righ*, *Henry Irving*, and the noble bicolor, *Horsfieldi*! But the wealth of kinds is so great that to attempt to individualise is an almost hopeless task. All sections, from the strange moisture-loving *Narcissus cyclamineus*, through the bicolors, incomparabilis forms, *Tazettas*, to the pure white *Poet's*, are amenable to this way of culture. A dainty flower is *N. rupicolor*, also the pure white *Basket Daffodil*, but all the smaller forms, the charming little *N. nanus*, *minimus*, and others are happier in pots than even in the lower parts of the rock garden. *N. Johnstoni Queen of Spain* is a sturdy kind, very free and clear in colour. The whole routine of culture is very simple. Simply pot up the bulbs in autumn, four or five in a 5in. pot, and seven or eight of the smaller kinds. Plunge in coal ashes, and, when growth commences, transfer to a warm house. These pure-coloured flowers of spring are never too abundant.

EFFECT OF IVY ON TREES.

We were lately told by an owner of a large and beautiful garden that *Ivy* was not hurtful to tree growth. If anyone thinks for a moment, this, of course, is false. *Ivy* is distinctly hurtful, stifling the tree, robbing it of light and air, which naturally means a slow death. Beautiful as *Ivy* is at all times, whether clothing in a mantle of greenery some bare wall, or caressing the trunk of a forest tree, its effect upon living things is as harmful as any parasite, such as *Mistletoe* upon the *Apple*. True, the *Ivy* does not live upon its host, but its wiry shoots close firmly round the branches and embrace them with an iron grip—the grip of death. We strongly advise all who have permitted *Ivy* to establish itself in the woodland to remove it at this time, especially if growing round trees with thick, rough, or soft bark.

THE FRENCH CRAB APPLE.

Good late Apples are so scarce, that the kinds we prize should be planted more largely, and the French Crab is as prolific and good eating as any. Our experience is that no variety is later, cropping regularly and freely, and the tree is not of too vigorous growth. The writer has excellent fruits in his store, as green and firm as when first gathered in late autumn. As spring approaches the skin becomes a clear golden yellow colour.

SILLY PRUNING OF SHRUBS.

We have watched with grief lately the silly yearly practice of gardeners in the London parks, whose duty it is every winter to mutilate above and below the flowering and deciduous shrubs of all kinds that were planted, we believe, at first to beautify the open space saved from the builder. Private gardeners, unfortunately, are not innocent of this objectionable and ignorant habit. We have for many years written against pruning indiscriminately flowering shrubs, but if in private places a more reasonable course is taken, in the parks the work goes on merrily. It is as yet a part of the year's programme, as much as planting the bulbs for the spring. Dismal masses of growth, entangled before the year has expired, are responsible for this. Shrubs are planted too thickly at first, and, when expanding, are cut back to a certain space, not thinned to give each a chance of revealing its true beauty of growth or flower. The poorest shrub in the garden should be allowed to grow, but wholesale cutting back and thinning out, applied to every kind alike, is silly. When shrubs become crowded, the proper course is to remove some, and transplant elsewhere. Cut away worn-out growths to encourage young wood, and never touch early-flowering shrubs in autumn. When these require cutting in, let it be done after they have flowered. Every kind of shrub must be studied. Treatment fatal to one is renewed life to another; there is no set rule.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are always pleased to assist readers in gardening troubles, and to receive notes and photographs.

MESSRS. DANIELS BROS., of Norwich, send us their interesting catalogue of flower and vegetable seeds for the present year. It is well illustrated.

OBSERVATIONS OF A FIELD NATURALIST.

ROOKS AND WALNUTS.

THE rook is a prodigal, who squanders food in seasons of plenty, and is fain to try and fill himself from the empty husks afterwards. When the walnuts are ripe, it is seldom that the big tree on the other side of our water has not at least one rook clumsily flapping and plunging at the end of a branch in the endeavour to pull off a nut. Presently the stalk yields, and he falls from the branch with the loot in his bill. Recovering himself before reaching the ground, he flaps upwards across the water to the topmost branch of a dead oak tree, which stands like a skeleton giant, overawing a clump of young limes and birches. From this point the wary rook can keep his eye on every man or boy who moves in half-a-dozen

parishes, and after transferring the walnut from his bill to his left foot, he proceeds to crack it. You realise the power of the rook's bill when he bends his head back, stiffens his whole body, and delivers a blow hammerwise with unerring aim at the soft point where the juncture of the walnut's shells is separated by the spongy tissue through which the sap from the stalk used to flow into the interior of the nut. But the rook's bill, however powerful, was never intended to crack walnuts, because it is obvious that his feet are not constructed to hold them during the process. Almost more often than not the first two or three blows drive the walnut out of his grasp, and it falls to the ground. In the early morning, when no human beings are about, the rook is not too dignified to descend and recover it; but during the daytime he prefers to let it lie, and goes off to the tree for another. Thus the children find that the easiest way to collect walnuts is to look for them under the dead oak tree. Each one found there has a small hole punched in the base, and among the scattered green husks lie the shells of many others which the rooks have emptied, after hammering away more than half of one side of the shell.

THE BIRDS' SOUP KITCHEN.

As the walnuts grow scarce the rooks turn their attention to the acorns, and these are often dropped in the same way and may be picked up in numbers, with irregular incisions made close to the base by the rook's bill. When the common acorns are finished, those of the holm oak remain to provide casual "snacks" throughout the winter; but the small size of this acorn causes the rook to regard it with some contempt. As real winter draws on the rook takes an interest in our farmyard proceedings. Although never caught in the act of theft, he is always suspiciously close at hand when the fowls and ducks are being fed, and during a frost he is a regular attendant, at a respectful distance, on the swans' meals. He dare not come up to the pan of food, because it is placed at the foot of the house steps, but he sits—several of him—upon neighbouring trees and flaps his wings with impatience while the moorhens stroll up in their flippant way and help themselves to what the swans have left. After the moorhens come the starlings and the sparrows, and it is from the last that the rook reaps the reward of his patience.

ROBBING THE SPARROW.

He thoroughly understands the sparrow. Given a dish of soaked bread, grain, and meal, and a hungry sparrow, the rook knows perfectly well that the sparrow will seize the largest piece of bread which he can see and fly off with it. That is the rook's opportunity. With a blustering rush, in which his rustling wings and whisking tail make an absurd parody of a hawk's swoop, he scares the sparrow into dropping the bread, which the bully promptly carries off to the top of the dead oak tree and rapidly gulps down. Sometimes the sparrow frantically dashes with the bread into a bush of refuge, where he is torn by conflicting emotions. The rook is waiting outside, but half-a-dozen of his own hungry kind are assembling, chattering and jostling, inside. Eventually the bread is eaten by somebody, though the original captor's share is always a small one. Of all our sparrows, the only one which gets a square meal every time is a female bird with injured legs. She has some difficulty in getting to the dinner-table, but once there she flops upon it, steadying herself with spread tail and wings, and eats until she can eat no more. Then she flops off it, and, rising from the ground with difficulty, flies straight away out of sight. She is never seen except at meal-times, and one of these days she will provide a meal-time for the cat. But we shall all be sorry when that day comes. Sparrows are so many and so much alike that, besides "the lame sparrow," the only one whom we know personally is "the sparrow with the white feather in his tail."

THE HEIGHT OF ALBINISM.

And this sparrow constantly reminds me that the tendency to albinism in birds displays itself more frequently now than was the case twenty years ago. Perhaps the Wild Birds' Protection Act and the extinction of vermin are already modifying the conditions of the struggle of the birds for existence, by reducing the necessity for protective colouring, or—more probably, perhaps—I am drawing a general conclusion from local data. But in this neighbourhood we have had a rook with two white primaries in each wing, the sparrow with a white tail feather, a

blackbird with white speckles on the neck and breast, and a buff starling which appears to have light-coloured eyes also. No doubt the tendency to albinism is a constant force in Nature, relieving a species of the cost of production of colouring matter. We see its most complete development—apart from those instances where it secures protection amid snowy surroundings—in the swan. This bird, we may be sure, did not attain its conspicuous outline and hue in regions where birds of prey coexisted of sufficient strength and size to prey upon it. And in the dusky hue of the young swan we see the protective colouration of the bird in the stress and struggle of its evolution. The swan of the present is the last word of development of grace and beauty along a particular line. It suggests placid waters of perfect peace and loveliness, where it floats serene above its mirrored reflection. Such places, except in noblemen's parks or public pleasure grounds, are now rare, and the swan, as a wild creature, is on the high road to extinction. He has been tempted by easy circumstances to follow the ideal of beauty—for purposes of sexual selection—beyond the limit of safety according to natural selection, and wild species who do that must go. Yet it is something to know that human admiration for the swan will not only perpetuate the tame type for ever, but will insensibly improve it, and that the swan of the future will be larger, more graceful in outline, more quaintly adorned as to the bill, and more heavily plumed and fantastic in "showing off" than the mere swan of to-day. Perhaps man may even prove equal to the task of improving the swan's legs.

SWANS AS ACROBATS.

A swan's splay feet are certainly not adapted for walking up a steep flight of narrow steps. Our swans walk up, however, whenever they think their meals are late; and, as they generally antedate feeding-time by about half-an-hour, the rattling of their bills upon the back door at the top of the garden steps is heard often. When the cook opens the door they hiss at her, and, as she is afraid of them, some delicate manoeuvring ensues to get the birds and the pan of food down to the garden. The cob—the male swan—always takes the plunge first, and, though he found it awkward coming up flap-footed, going down is worse. But it does not last so long. After feeling with foolish care for the next step, first with one foot and then with the other, he trips and toboggans down on his chest. The pen—the female bird—thinks that she is being deserted in the moment of danger, and tumbles down after him. Arrived at the bottom they both ruffle out their plumes and hiss at the descending cook, who cautiously hands them the pan (in the illustration she is BRIBING THEM WITH CRUMBS to get out of the way), after which all is peace for a minute. Then, having gulped down as much as they can carry, they waddle off, with lumps of food still visibly travelling down their throats, along the gravel path leading to the water.

THEIR CLUMSY FLIGHT.

Sometimes they are frightened while feeding, and then they fly to the water. Before rising they run with a quick paddling action of the feet and flapping wings for about 5yds., and one or other of them almost invariably illustrates the poor control which a swan has over its flight by missing the water altogether. The point at which they embark and disembark is a narrow creek exactly opposite the house—for the swan does not care about walking a yard further than is absolutely necessary—and in flying back one generally lands with a thud upon the opposite bank. When this happens the bird sometimes bounces about a yard from the place where its breast struck the ground, and then flaps hurriedly into the water. It is never, seemingly, injured by the accident, and it is always the hindmost bird—generally, if not always, the female—to whom it occurs. On two occasions the female, following the male in a circling flight round the water, has been unable, apparently, to check herself, and has gone away through the trees, landing nearly a mile off, once on the high road and once in the middle of a field. On both occasions she seemed unable to make an effort to fly back, although uninjured, and had to be brought home. Is it possible that, having all her life imitated the actions of the stronger bird, she is incapable of independent action? Of her delight when she is brought back and sees him once more, there can be no question; and the caressing notes with which they greet each other after the agony of an hour's separation are among the most musical in birdhood.

E. K. R.



BRIBING THEM WITH CRUMBS.



"Matches."

A PLAY otherwise calling for no comment, deserves mention when so winsome and clever an actress as Miss Annie Hughes plays the principal character in it; were it not for her, "Matches" might well be passed over in silence, for it was neither art, drama, amusing, or, in fact, anything but inane. It is a curious thing that clever actors and actresses are quite unable to judge of the general merits or demerits of a piece, so long as it contains a superficially "good part" for themselves. Just as though there could be a good part in a bad whole, or anything but a merely theatrically "effective" one, which is always the most ineffective thing to be imagined. For a character, to be really "strong," must draw its strength from its surroundings, from the strength or humour of the story of which it should be merely an item, and from the emotions which should bear upon it.

"Matches" is a tawdry stage novelette of the most mediocre and namby-pamby kind. Produced at a "trial matinée" at the Comedy Theatre, its only claim to attention here is its capacity as a vehicle for the talents of Miss Annie Hughes. On the surface, the part of the heroine might have seemed a promising one to Miss Hughes, but that could only be because she is really not the best judge of what is fitted to display the pathos and the humour of which she is mistress. The fact that previously she had made a personal success in a sickly sentimental one-act play, in which she was a very charming—though, through the fault of the author and not her own, a wholly unreal—flower-girl, should not have had sufficient weight with Miss Hughes to persuade her to accept for production another work merely because a match-girl figures as its heroine.

We all know that match-girl. We are quite aware that she is certain to be an heiress, that she will develop into the most refined and elegant of young ladies, that she will, in all probability, fall in love with her aristocratic guardian, and that her passion will be returned. It is not much of a story in itself; but, in the hands of an author who understands the art of his calling, who has a grasp of nature, and can see beneath the mere conventions of such a subject—who could let a little real human nature into it, who had the skill and the imagination to put the very heart and brain of the waif under a literary Röntgen ray, that we might see the workings of her emotions, and follow the metamorphosis of her mind under the influence of refinement and of love—there might be for such a subject the success of treatment.

But, outside France, we could not get it done lightly, with the delicate touch which would be one way of treating it; and outside the highest ranks of English authorship, we could not obtain it as a morbid study or a tragedy *in petto*. Whoever may have been the author of "Matches," he had no qualifications whatever for the task, and so Kitty, the match-girl, was mere waste of time.

Had Kitty been anything more than the ordinary puppet, the mere doll of inferior fiction, Miss Annie Hughes would have found her artistic instincts too strong for her to play the part in the way in which she did play it. The authors provided a doll, and she clothed it with the charm of her personality, but not of her art. Kitty's face was quite smug and clean when she came from her match-selling; Kitty's hair was as glossy and beautifully brushed as though it had just left the deft hands of a lady's-maid.

Kitty's accent was certainly exaggerated Cockney, but Cockney accents, by themselves, do not make a character. Had the author done his share, Miss Hughes—who is an artist—would have put into the character all that Jenny Lee put into Jo, or that the late Jenny Hill put into her wonderful sketches of coster life. Kitty would have been a real and living figure—not merely the pretty girl playing at being a street arab. Even the flower-seller had much more truth.

As for the rest of the characters, they hardly count. Mr. Harry Nicholls was another coster, with just as little reality in

him; but it was not his fault. Mrs. Leigh and the others were in exactly the same boat—puppets, and nothing more. If some-one will come along and provide Miss Hughes with a part worthy of her, we shall have a character worth watching and taking seriously.

DRAMATIC NOTES.

THE moderately-sized world which is interested in things theatrical has had much amusement recently in the controversy begun by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, continued by Mr. George Moore, and, for the moment, ended by Mr. William Archer. The whole thing has been brought to a head by Mr. Archer's reply to Mr. Moore. It was not necessary for him to have replied. Neither to Mr. Archer, the learned, if somewhat anæmic, dramatic critic of the *World*, who occupies a place all by himself because of his erudition and his aloofness, nor to Mr. Jones, popular playwright and most successful dramatist, are the advertising methods of Barnum necessary. Mr. Moore, perhaps, stands on a different basis. That Mr. Archer should have answered the vinegary attack of Mr. Jones is perhaps not to be wondered at, for here, at least, he had an opponent worthy of his steel; but that he should have troubled to notice the incoherent impertinences of Mr. George Moore strikes one as being beneath his dignity. Before Mr. Moore has any right to assume the championship of the British drama, it is necessary for him to prove his right to speak, his knowledge of his subject, his efforts towards its well-being. All these things remain for Mr. Moore to do. His connection as a subsidiary member of the committee of the defunct Independent Theatre Society hardly entitles him to speak with authority on behalf of the British drama. Nor does the authorship of somewhat clever but wholly uninspired novels of the seamy side of theatrical life entitle him so to speak.

Luckily, from his own mouth Mr. Moore is convicted, and his unfitness for the task of critic proved to the hilt. In his Introduction to two plays just published by the Messrs. Duckworth, "The Heather Field" and "Maevæ"—both by Mr. Edward Martyn—Mr. Moore covers with abuse Robert Louis Stevenson, Mr. Henley, Mr. Pinero, Mr. Henry James, Mr. George Alexander, and other gentlemen whose work for the stage has won for them the respect and admiration of students far more earnest and clear-sighted than Mr. George Moore, and, in language which loses all force because of its unconsciously humorous braggadocio, smoothes them with obloquy. Their work, according to Mr. Moore, is beneath contempt. He adduces no argument to prove his contention; he simply says it, and pretends to think—or perhaps he really does think—that that is enough. If we could take serious notice of the funny diatribe of Mr. Moore we should cease to believe that Art was subjective, and the axiom would be accepted that beauty was exact and definable, according to standard—and that standard, of course, would be the individual taste of Mr. George Moore. What a curious standard that would be we can judge from Mr. Moore's declaration that the only peer of Shakespeare is Ibsen, and that a certain scene in "The Heather Field" is more essentially human than anything in the English prose drama of the present century. This scene is between an elderly man and his brother, lamenting his lost youth. Let us make an extract from this particular scene to discover what are Mr. Moore's claims to speak as a critic of literature, let alone of drama:

TYRRELL: I suppose I had troubles then, as now; but memory has idealised those past scenes, till only their beauty remains, wafted back to me like an aroma from some lost paradise. I feel I shall never know the joy of those days again.

MILES: You must not think of such things, Carden. Days as good as these will, I am sure, return.

TYRRELL: Ah no, Miles—their poetry never—the hope that shines like a spring-day sun upon our youth! It warms us with such life. It inspires us to attempt so many deeds. With what expectations we travel. What materials we are to make out of it all. Do you remember when we went abroad together? . . . What fairie towns we came to—Boppard on the Rhine, with its quaint old houses. Then we sailed our boat through the hills to Lorlei, and watched where the river nymphs used long ago to glide, laughing, through the gold-lit depths of the stream,

and so on. This very ordinary, though fairly pretty, sentiment, conveyed through pedantically-formed sentences: "Days as good as these will, I am sure, return," "gold-lit depths of the stream," and so on, is described by this critic or Stevenson, Pinero, James, and the rest, as "so essentially human," "a beautiful and pathetic expression of that passionate wistfulness which rises up to the heart and brain when we look back on the days of our early youth, those days fresh and fugitive as the days of early spring, when the buds are braving into tiny leaf, and the daffodils star the grass. . . . Mr. Martyn probes deeper than the ephemeral griefs which circumstances create. . . . We are face to face with that primal melancholy which is at the root of human existence, we look into its eyes, infinite as the sky, and are absorbed in pity for all things that live, and we feel in our soul the truth that man was not intended to be happy."

Was ever such a mountain of words called forth by achievement so little? It is a pretty scene, a pregnant scene, a fanciful scene; but it consists only of a mediocre idea, expressed in medium fashion. Mr. Moore thinks it unequalled in our prose drama of the century, and yet Mr. Moore claims the right to dictate to us as a critic, nay, a god.

What Mr. Moore's idea of dialogue should be, how language should be expressed in writing, we can further judge by his method of narrating a conversation between himself and Mr. George Alexander. This is supposed to be a report of a colloquy which really took place:

"I have brought to you a play, Alexander, in which there is a real live man. He has never been seen on the stage—no, he is not out of a novel." That is Mr. Moore's idea of realism, "I have brought to you a play, Alexander"—how people really speak.

What an infinite amount of harm gush of this sort may do to the talent which calls it forth. Had Mr. Martyn been allowed to work out his own salvation, had he been left to do as other far greater geniuses have had to do—to work to success through failure, to gain experience, to fight his way upwards, learning from hard truth the way to appeal to the hearts and heads of the critical public, he might have developed into a worthy and an honoured dramatist. But no, he has to be spoiled, made to look ridiculous, in order that Mr. George Moore may have the opportunity of airing his peculiar views and keeping his name in the newspapers. It is hard lines if the artist is merely to paint his picture, or write his play, in order to form the peg for the scribbler of the "Introduction."

PHEBUS.



MY DEAR ROGER,—

In order to follow the fashion, I must begin my little epistolary chat with you by "talking about the weather." One never meets a man nowadays but that he does not open up the conversational lead by swearing more or less savagely at the unseasonable temperature. Certainly for years past I do not suppose we have had such a mild January, and so, as the current belief is that when the winter is unseasonably mild the health statistics suffer in proportion, it is no wonder that the average man grumbles. As a matter of fact this belief in the unhealthiness of mild weather in winter has been proved to be an absolute fallacy. One has only to take the death-rate during a hard winter, such as that of five years ago, and compare it with one like the present, to see that the facts turn in quite the other direction. The truth of the matter seems to be that during a period of high winter temperatures the death-rate falls perceptibly below the normal, just as it rises during a very hot summer. Thus there are two benefits which accrue to us in a time like this—a diminution of unhealthiness, and constancy of employment for a vast number of workmen. Into the question as to whether the farmer would be more benefited by some weeks of hard frost, you are much better fitted to enter than myself. You ought to bear in mind, however, that though last winter was a very mild one, by all accounts last summer's harvest was the best we have had for some time. With that I will leave it, except I may add that nothing can exceed the misery and discomfort, to those whose business or pleasure takes them into the London streets, which the persistent drizzling rain of the last week or two has caused.

Driving down the Marylebone Road the other day, I was surprised to see how near completion the Great Central Hotel has been brought. It is, as you know, to form a more or less integral portion of the new railway terminus, the approach to which has wrought such havoc to St. John's Wood, and it is expected that it will derive an assured patronage from the travellers who enter London by this new route. With the opening of each new addition to the group of enormous hotels of which London can now boast, one shakes one's head and wonders from where the custom is going to come. But they hopefully and hospitably throw open their doors, and, so far as the outsider can tell, seem to thrive and prosper. There is one feature about the Great Central which so far as I know is a novelty, which, strange to say, has not been borrowed from the United States. The flat roof, which is of enormous extent, is to be utilised as a cycle track, the idea being that when the roads outside are impassable to the cyclist, as they so often are by reason of the sticky black mud with which they are encumbered, the guests may enjoy their wonted spin without stepping outside the hotel.

People are talking about the rather peculiar will of the late Lord Winchelsea. After leaving the bulk of his property to the Countess, he leaves a small yearly sum to the St. Andrew's Guild of Ringers at Ewerby, on condition that the vicar and churchwardens certify that the bells have been regularly rung for Divine service during the preceding twelve months, while another small sum is left to the Ringers to encourage them to regularly practise the art of change ringing. He leaves also £1 to provide

for the preaching of a sermon at Ewerby to commemorate the restoration of the church, the market cross, and the completion of the ten bells. The interest the Earl took in agriculture, and the time and money he spent in endeavouring to forward its interests, are well known to you. You will appreciate then what seems to me the pathos of the concluding sentence in the will. It runs as follows: "God save agriculture and receive my soul for the Lord Jesus' sake, Amen."

I met young George L— the other day. He has, as you know, taken to journalism, as seems to be the fashion nowadays with so many youngsters who in our day would have gone to the bar and probably have starved there while waiting for briefs. He gave me some gossip of his trade which interested even me as an outsider. For one thing, he told me that we are to have very soon a Sunday paper, by which I mean a Sunday edition of an existing daily. So soon as it is settled in its new building, which will not be a matter of many months, the *Daily Mail* will be published on Sundays as well as weekdays. This move, young George told me, would have been made long ago had it not been for the mechanical difficulties in the way. At present the existing premises suffice for the printing of the *Daily Mail*; but that is not the only publication in which the proprietors are interested, and they obtain assistance from other quarters. It is therefore inexpedient that they should attempt to print a Sunday paper before their own plant suffices for all their needs. When this is the case they will produce a Sunday paper, and the *Daily Mail* will become truly hebdomadal. George also told me that young Lord Rosslyn is really working hard and earnestly upon, and having some success with, his little weekly, *Scottish Life*. He is thinking of moving the entire establishment to Edinburgh, which, as his circulation lies almost wholly in Scotland, seems a sensible thing to do. He has bought out the interest that Alfred Harmsworth had in the paper, and holds it entirely in his own hands.

I have had an invitation to dine with the Article Club on the 1st of next month, when Baron de Bush will hold forth on the subject of "Commercial Exhibition." I think I shall go, as I am told there is likely to be a very lively discussion. It seems that many of the leading English manufacturers are extremely dissatisfied with the arrangements for the Paris Exhibition, holding that the rules and regulations are cleverly contrived in the interests of the French, and to the detriment of the English exhibitors. They will probably take this opportunity of airing some of their grievances. Do you know what the Article Club is, by the way? One constantly sees accounts of its meetings in the papers, but I fancy very few people know much about it. It consists of a number of business men, most of them of high standing, and the condition precedent of their election is that an article concerning their particular business must have appeared in the pages of a trade journal named *Commerce*. As it costs 300 guineas to have such an article published, one may say that the Article Club boasts of a higher entrance fee than any other club in London.

Did you see that gruesome story which the *Chronicle* has gravely propounded as a test of the English sense of humour? To the best of my recollection it concerns an individual at a dinner-party, who, when the salad bowl was brought round, dipped his hands into it and then passed them through his hair. To the natural remonstrances of his neighbour he merely stared at her in an absent-minded way, and then remarked, as if suddenly recalled to himself: "Dear me; was that salad? I thought it was spinach!" I suppose I and my friends must, from the *Chronicle's* point of view, be sadly destitute of humour, for I have not yet met anyone, and everyone is talking about it, who could see just where the joke comes in. One sees vaguely what the story-teller is driving at, and that the yarn belongs to the *non sequitur* order of anecdote. It is never a very promising form of humour at its best, but I think one of the most amusing of its kind was that which Chauncey M. Depew, the well-known American after-dinner speaker and humourist, once told me as being one of his test anecdotes. It concerned a debating society in Maryland, which for two sessions gravely debated the question, "Did the barn burn up, or did it burn down?" Amid great excitement the question was put to the adjudicator to answer, and he reached the solemn conclusion that "It did!" Depew told me how he tried this story on two aristocratic Englishwomen, and that when he had finished, one of them suavely asked, "But what did it do, Mr. Depew?"

I lunched with F— at the Arts Club the other day, and of course was treated to all the gossip anent the forthcoming elections of the Royal Academy. There are three new Associates to be chosen, as well as an honorary Foreign Academician, so that there is ample room for speculation, as to the fortunate ones. This is always unprofitable work, however, for the Academicians have a knack of doing the unexpected at these elections of theirs; and the man supposed by the art world in general as being sure of his associateship, more frequently than not is found at the bottom of the list. It is pretty certain, however, that a sculptor will be found this month among the elected ones, and judging from what I hear, I should not be surprised if his name were

F. W. Pomeroy. I see that in many of the papers, Alfred East is looked on as favourite; but though he is without doubt, any manner of doubt, in the front rank of our English landscape painters, there are personal influences working against him which will militate against his election. I heard it suggested, indeed, that Yeend King stands a better chance, though, artistically speaking, there is no comparison between the two men. It is this sort of thing that gives artists the opportunity to say the unkind things they do about the Academy, and accounts for attacks like Mr. W. J. Laidlay's recent book on the "Royal Academy; its Uses and Abuses."

I am not one of those who look upon the London "cabby" as a being set quite outside the pale of humanity, or as one quite given up to extortion and general blackguardism. I pass a good deal of time, as you know, in cabs, and it is quite the exception for me to be brought into contact with a cabman who is other than civil or obliging. They live a hard and unthankful life, and, as compared with the Parisian *cocher* or the New York driver, they are angels of light and politeness. I must say, however, that I have some sympathy with the plaintiff in the last police-court case. At ten o'clock at night he proposed to take a cab by the hour, and to pay the fare as set forth on the neat enamelled iron plate which is part of the furniture of every well-regulated cab—the sum of half-a-crown an hour. The cabman refused to budge under three shillings, asking the fare if he wanted him to walk, thus exposing a neat little trick indulged in by cabmen at large in order to discourage the public from hiring by time instead of distance. The fare did not want either to crawl at a snail's pace or to pay more than the legal fare; hence an adjournment to Marylebone Police Court. Here, to the surprise of everyone, including the magistrate, Mr. Curtis Bennett, a recondite Act of Parliament took its place in the witness-box. By this it appears that a cabman cannot be compelled to take a fare by time between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., and it was a clear win for "cabby." And the plaintiff left the court with Mr. Curtis Bennett's advice not to appeal to a superior court ringing in his ears.

Yours as ever,

CHARLES TOWNLEY.



A LIFEBOAT, rather than a bicycle, has been the right sort of machine for getting to golf links in the gales and floods of the last few weeks, but for all that it has happened to us just now to see a very good sort of golf-bag for fitting to bicycles; and it may be that the roads will dry up and the wind fall sufficiently for us to bicycle to our golf some day again. The bag holds eight clubs. It can be fixed to the backbone, or whatever it is called, of the machine in such a way that it is really not a great bother, and when you take it off the bicycle you can put it on your caddy, and he can carry the clubs round in it as comfortably as in the common kind of bag. It would be unkind, after saying all this in its favour, not to tell the golfer where he may get a thing that is likely to be so useful to him. The makers, we believe, are the Royal Standard Cycle Company, of Aston, near Birmingham.

At Bournemouth, Mr. H. Kinsey won the medal with a very good score, 88—12=76. The Bournemouth course is a short one, but it presents a pleasing variety of peril for the inaccurate player, and it is not often we see the monthly medal taken in so low a score as this. We have noticed before the tendency that winning figures seem to have towards repeating themselves. It was with a nett 76 that the latest (and first for the Lent term) competition of the Cambridge University Club was won. There cannot be much run on the ball after the fall on Coldham Common under the present dispensation of Jupiter Pluvius, and there is no doubt at all that 76 nett means a fine score, especially as the wind was stiff. The winner was Mr. F. W. Eddison, with 83—7=76, 83 again being an uncommonly good gross return for a seven handicap man under the circumstances. Mr. Athorp, with 80, had the lowest scratch return, and was second of the nett scores, with two strokes allowed. Mr. Leathart was round in a gross, and nett, 80. In the second class, Mr. L. G. Davis won with 101—18=83.

Bogey has been too strong for most of his enemies in the wet and windy weather. Dr. J. Law won the Guildford Club's Bogey competition with three holes down. At Hastings scores were high in the January medal meeting. Mr. R. A. Mossman was winner, with 97—9=88. Mr. H. L. Foster had the lowest gross return, but it was no lower than 89, and Mr. H. S. Colt, who owes two, returned 90—all high figures; but the wind was very high too, and the Hastings course is exposed, and forgives no erratic driving.

A singular match has lately been played between a golfer and an archer, the object of the former being, as is usual, to put his ball into the eighteen holes in the least possible number of strokes, and that of the archer to shoot his arrow into the eighteen holes in less strokes than are possible for the golfer. The archer has won handsomely. One does not quite know what the details of

the conditions may have been. The archer would certainly have this great point in his favour—that the ball would always be lying on a tee—his arrow would never be bunkered. On the other hand, it seems as if some trouble would come on the putting green. The archer would have to be very "dead" to shoot the ball into the 4th hole. It is a match we should like to have seen.

Eighty-two has been rather a favourite winning score for the monthly medal competitions that were played a week before the 76 fashion set in. Mr. C. H. Liddell won at Epping Forest with 91—9=82; and won handsomely, by three strokes. Mr. Harold Taylor, at the Crowborough Beacon Club's meeting, returned 87—5=82, which was best by two strokes; and the same nett score won the monthly medal of the St. George's Club. Mr. Paine won at Seaford, with 85—6=79; Mr. P. S. Lee, with nine, being only a stroke more, and Mr. Barton, with six, a stroke more again.



WHAT I, or anyone else, can find to write about under the above title this week it is difficult to say. There is no use in flogging a dead horse, and it is equally hopeless to try to write anything that will interest anyone about an almost dead sport. At the little meetings which cannot afford to give more than £40 and £50 stakes to run for, we do not of course expect to see high-class racing; but when it comes to meetings like Manchester and Hurst Park, and they cannot give us half as good sport as we used once to see at Bromley and Kingsbury, the end cannot be far. In a short time, I suppose, we shall see the same sort of plating at Liverpool, and then the sport will be actually as well as morally extinct.

When writing my notes last week, I had to make the same complaint about the previous week's racing, but added that we should probably see an improvement at Manchester and Hurst Park. Unfortunately this turned out too hopeful a view of the situation, and it really appears as if we are never again going to see any cross-country sport worth the name. At Manchester, on Tuesday, there was not a single really interesting race, whilst on Wednesday the three steeplechases only brought out eight runners, all told, and the whole half-dozen events on the card were contested by a beggarly total of twenty-six runners. The two best performances of the meeting were those of Mrs. Grundy in the Manchester Handicap Steeplechase on Tuesday, and of Eclipse in the January Hurdle Race on the second day.

Mrs. Grundy is a six year old mare by Tyrant, now standing at Mr. McIntyre's stud at Theakston Hall, in Yorkshire, out of Jennie Cameron, by Scottish Chief, and was bred by Lord Scarborough at Tickhill. She does not seem to have been any good on the flat, but having been schooled at Captain Beatty's establishment at Rugby, where she is now, she is a very quick, good jumper, and goes like staying well over fences. On this occasion she gained ground over every fence and, staying the three miles well—thanks to her easy style of jumping—she won in the commonest of canterers from Lamlay, who started favourite, and Grudon, who finished third. Very few chasers are properly schooled in these days, but that it pays to do so has lately been once more demonstrated by the performances of that wonderful little mare, Parma Violet. Captain Beatty's horses are usually better schooled than most, which is perhaps partly due to the opportunities he has of schooling them over such a fine natural country as that which surrounds his training quarters at Rugby. No horse is worth calling a steeplechaser until he can jump when he is tired, and this he will only learn by jumping all sorts of fences out of all sorts of ground, and going on at it. One run with hounds over a good country is worth a month's galloping on good going over artificial obstacles.

Eclipse made such a promising *debut* over hurdles at Lingfield three weeks ago, that most good judges made a note of him as likely to win a race of this description before the season was much older, and this event came to pass in the January Hurdle Race on Wednesday. Odds of 11 to 8 were laid on Eclipse, 4 to 1 against Phil Brown, to whom the favourite was giving 16lb., and 8 to 1 against Carriden, to whom he was conceding 3lb. The favourite, who had won his race a long way from home, cantered in three lengths in front of Phil Brown, with Carriden, who blundered at the last hurdle, third. This was quite a smart performance on the part of the winner. Carriden had already run second in the Ellesmere Handicap Hurdle Race on the previous afternoon, being beaten by Sporrán, an aged grey gelding by Buckranger out of a mare by Marquis of Townshend, who is not in the Stud Book. He is the property of Mr. J. E. Rogerson, the Master of the North Durham Hounds, and as he beat Carriden by a length and a-half at 7lb., and finished a long way in front of Scotch Wisdom, to whom he was conceding 2lb., he will probably win another race or two of this sort. The five year old Night Watchman beat Perth Lad and two others in the Trafford Park Handicap Steeplechase, but the form does not amount to much; and then the last race of the meeting, the three-mile Cheshire Steeplechase Plate, brought out two runners only, the four year old Lohengrin and the five year old Maidenhair. The latter came to grief very soon after starting, and took no further part in the race, whilst Lohengrin also fell two fences from home, but being remounted, managed to complete the course and secure the stake. Thus, out of the three steeplechases on the card, the first was contested by two runners, one of whom fell, whilst the other finished alone, and the last was an exact repetition of the first, with the difference that *both* runners came to grief. Such is steeplechasing in the year 1899, thanks to the National Hunt Committee and their mischievous legislation.

Surely we shall see something better than this at Hurst Park on Friday and Saturday, was the hope in everyone's mind as we turned our backs on Manchester. There is no better or more popular course anywhere for National Hunt sport than that on Molesley Hurst. It was an attractive programme, and

the entries promised two really good days' racing. And yet it all resulted in one interesting race, the Surbiton Steeplechase Plate. A number of the best chasers in training—such as they are in these days—were entered, but we saw nothing of them except on paper, and there were a number of high-class hurdle-race recruits down to run, but they too failed to put in an appearance, all except the Prince of Wales's Oakdene. He was naturally made favourite for the Kingston Handicap Hurdle Race Plate, but was never in the hunt, and apparently runs no more generously over sticks than on the flat. The winner turned up in Vet.-Major Edwards's Cassock's Pride, lately imported from Ireland, where he had won a number of races. When are we going to see Minstrel, Dielytra, The Spook, and Orzil make their *débuts* over hurdles? I wonder. I should not be surprised to see the last-named turn out the best hurdler we have seen since Chandos. He is just the sort to do so, with his quick easy action and brilliant speed.

The last race of the first day, the Surbiton Steeplechase Plate of three miles, only brought out three runners, one of whom, Glen Royal, might just as well have remained in his stable for all the chance he had. Nevertheless all the interest of the afternoon's sport was concentrated in this event, seeing that it brought about the meeting of Parma Violet and Cathal, with the Irish mare carrying 6lb. the most weight of the pair. There is no doubt that Cathal must have been a useful chaser on that afternoon in 1895 on which, when by no means fully wound up, he hunted Wild Man from Borneo home at Liverpool. He also ran second to Drogheda in last year's Grand National, though, on the other hand, the "Wild Man," nice wiry little horse and accomplished fencer as he undoubtedly was, is probably the worst horse that ever won a "Liverpool," whilst there was nothing to swagger about amongst the beaten lot except Horizon, who would probably have won but for a mistake at the water. Personally I could never take quite the exaggerated view of Cathal's merits that the handicappers do, and as he has now been running for nearly four years in first-class company, and usually under a little too much weight, he may be beginning to get a little sick of it. Parma Violet, on the contrary, is a fresh six year old mare, whose stamina, gameness, and cleverness have made her absolutely invincible this season, and there is no saying what she may not be capable of. It was a big question to ask her to give 6lb. to Cathal, who never looked better, but although he was made favourite, I thought the little Irish mare would be too good for him. It was a pretty sight to see the two racing close together and jumping beautifully for the first two miles, and then I thought that the mare had got the measure of her opponent. Cathal evidently thought so himself, as he began to hang, and turning it up six furlongs from home, he left Parma Violet to canter in alone, forty lengths in front. This is the sixth successive steeplechase that this wonderful little mare has won this season, and I for one shall be very sorry to see her beaten.

On Saturday, that promising young hurdler Harvesting won the New Year Handicap Hurdle Race Plate, and Orange Pip, contrary to expectations, beat Lady Gilderoy in the Richmond Handicap Steeplechase Plate. Summer Lightning took the Courtlands Handicap Steeplechase, of two miles, from President and Oughterard, and so brought to a tame conclusion a very disappointing meeting. Unfortunately, this week's sport at Wolverhampton has been of the same old sort, of which everyone is so heartily sick by this time, but we might see something better on Friday at Birmingham, if Knife Boy, Fossicker, and Yorkmint are seen out for their engagements; whilst the Birmingham Grand Annual Steeplechase would be worth going a long way to see, if Ebor, 12st. 9lb., Morello, 12st. 9lb., and Sweet Charlotte, 12st. 4lb., were to oppose each other. This race is run over two miles, the best distance of each, and I should once have fancied Ebor at the weights. Believing as I do, however, that he has somewhat lost his dash, and doubting if Morello, good horse as he is, will give 5lb. to the Irish mare, I shall expect to see Sweet Charlotte win, and Morello finish second. I am afraid, however, we are not likely to have such a treat as to see a meeting between these three. We shall be racing at Kempton Park on Tuesday next, when Spook may be seen out for the Maiden Hurdle Race of 250 sovs., and which he will probably win if he is, whilst Knife Boy ought to take the Novices' Steeplechase. On Thursday next we shall know the weights for the Spring Handicaps, and then there will be plenty to talk and write about.

OUTPOST.

TRAP SHOOTING.

IN our last issue we gave some account of the progress of inanimate bird shooting in this country under the auspices of the Inanimate Bird Shooting Association. That association, formed about six years ago, was at first almost avowedly a trade combination, having for its object in chief the popularising of trap-shooting, with the ultimate view, of course, of thereby increasing the sale of guns and ammunition during the close season for game. A code of rules was drawn up, and wholesale manufacturers subscribed hand-somely to the funds on condition that the association would authorise the use only of materials of their manufacture in competitions at the various clubs started in England, Ireland, and Scotland, and affiliated to the parent association. On such affiliation a club became entitled to certain prizes presented to it by the association, as well as to compete for other prizes offered at the annual meeting at Wembley Park, which aims at supplying, in a small way, for the shot-gun what Bisley does for the rifle. Until 1895 the governing body was mainly composed of the original trade founders of the movement, but in that year it was entirely reconstituted with a view of introducing the principle of proportional representation, the governing body being now composed of one or more representative delegates from each of the thirty affiliated clubs and one delegate from each wholesale manufacturer subscribing to the funds of the association. There can be no doubt that much of the success of the association is to be attributed to the handsome support afforded in the way of subscriptions and donations by the leading manufacturers of guns and ammunition. Only by their help for the first few years was it possible to have carried on so energetically the work of the association and to have such valuable prizes presented for competition at the annual championship meetings. In return the association, by its regulations adopted by every affiliated club, prohibited the use in club competitions or practice of shooting materials other than those supplied by the manufacturers referred to, especially excluding anything of that nature that was not of British manufacture. By that rule members of affiliated clubs were, and are, debarred the use on the club grounds of such gunpowders, for instance, as Walsrode and Normal, or of clay-birds and traps of American or continental manufacture. Looked at in the light of a return for

very substantial contributions to the coffers of the association when such help was very much required in the infancy of the movement, such trade restrictions were reasonable enough even in the interests of the sport. Now that matters financial are on a stronger footing, and the club delegates on the governing body are in the large majority, a feeling has arisen that the time has arrived for removing the restrictions compelling members to use shooting materials of certain specified makes and to purchase them from certain specified dealers who are members of the association. It is feared that the growth of the Inanimate Bird Shooting Association may be impeded by clubs refusing to join an association one of the rules of which is that they should be restricted in the interests of various manufacturers as to the materials to be used. It is fully recognised that the list of permitted articles contains those best known in the market, but on the other hand, there are other materials not on the permitted list which shooters might desire to use. How manufacturers may decide to act as regards this expression of feeling in the clubs has not yet been indicated; but it is being pointed out that the restrictions are really of very little value to them, seeing that various clubs are already breaking the rule when it suits their convenience. All the more important manufacturers have each contributed a share towards the expense of starting and establishing the sport, so that the abolition of the restrictive rules would now be equally fair to each of them, and each would have an equal chance of supplying his manufactures to the members of the various clubs, while these members would be altogether unrestricted in their choice of shooting material of all kinds. This matter has been recently under consideration at several meetings of the governing body of the Inanimate Bird Shooting Association, and, it is believed, will come up in the form of a report for decision at the annual meeting of the association in February, at which the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of the able and obliging secretary, Mr. Max Baker, has to be filled by the vote of the members.

Meantime, as we have already pointed out, the manner of and material used in clay-bird shooting are not unlikely to be very much changed within the next few months. On Saturday last there was a very large attendance of shooters, as well as members of the London gun and ammunition trades, at the grounds of the Middlesex Gun Club, at Hendon, for the purpose of witnessing a trial of the new American trapping apparatus, which is being introduced here by Mr. Paul North, as representative of the Cleveland Target Company of Ohio, under the name of the Repau-trap. By the present rules of the Inanimate Bird Shooting Association, of course this new trap would be shut out from the clubs unless its inventor made arrangements for its being made and supplied by one of the manufacturing firms authorised by the association to sell materials to affiliated clubs. Be that as it may, the Repau-trap received a thorough trial in the presence of a number of experts at Hendon on Saturday last. Worked by a boy, seated on it much in the manner a bicyclist bestrides his saddle, it was seen throwing clays at the rate of from eighty to a hundred every minute, faster, indeed, than the competitors at the firing line could discharge their guns. The throwing lever is actuated by two pedals with cranks, which reset it every time it is released. By the pulling of a trigger a spring propels and discharges the clay-bird, or "target," as it is termed in America, which is replaced from the magazine by gravitation. This magazine holds five targets at one time, and as each of them is discharged by the lever another is placed in the magazine by the boy, whose feet are at the same time working the pedals of the bicycle motor. The whole process is a very easy and simple one, and during some hours' hard work on Saturday the mechanism never failed to act smoothly and regularly in throwing bird after bird in varying directions. Though two birds cannot be thrown at once, a "double rise" is possible by throwing the second bird so quickly after the first that for all practical purposes in shooting they are simultaneously in the air. It was noticeable, however, that the breakage of birds by the trap when "double rises" were being thrown was considerably greater than in ordinary work, probably as many as 10 per cent. of the birds being broken. On the whole, however, experts present expressed themselves satisfied that the new trap is a distinct advance on the old system of trapping with fixed ordinary traps and a trench, which has been the only mode of trapping clay-birds hitherto seen in this country. The Repau-trap is understood to be an improvement on the Megau-trap now used by all the leading gun clubs in the United States. It is in operation at over 300 such clubs at the present moment. The latter trap, however, is the more complicated in its mechanism, and requires a good deal of keeping in order by skilled mechanics. In it there is a constantly-revolving arm, through which, when a trigger is pulled, the clay-bird slides out, and is at once discharged by centrifugal force, the place of it being taken by another clay-bird from the magazine through the operation of gravitation, as in the Repau-trap. The latter only was exhibited at Hendon. It has few parts, and is easily worked and easily kept in order, so that if the rule referred to above be modified or abolished by the Inanimate Bird Shooting Association, it is very likely to become adopted by a number of our English gun clubs shortly, thereby cheapening the cost of clay-bird shooting considerably and popularising it still further throughout Great Britain.

NEVIS.



THIS has been as bad a week both for sport and weather as we have had this season. When the air is charged with storms, and every now and again a tearing squall comes sweeping down, scent cannot be expected to serve for long, and a dash up wind and long patient hunts down wind have been our lot. Yet who can be discontented, when it is possible to hunt every day on which the horses can go out? Nor do the fields in the Midlands seem much affected by the bad weather. Most men have plenty of horses, and mean to hunt as long as possible. However, if you have but few horses, a day off is allowable, since only a certain number of days can be put in. Besides, Cole's Lodge with the Cottessmore is better than the Quorn if a choice must be made. The weather was the best we had during the week. No sooner were hounds in Launde Park Wood than they told us of a find. The Cottessmore

litch pack are full of music, and if there is anything of a scent it is your own fault if you lose them, for, unlike some other packs, you can always tell where they are. Close to Loddington hounds wavered, but Gillson caught hold of them, and cast right forward beyond the village to East Norton. This was a clever bit of work, and hounds rewarded such well-timed help by dropping their sterns and going off at a good pace. When the Cottesmore litches run men must ride, even though the take off be deep and the fences hairy. With what undeserved luck some of us who shirked a bit got to them again as they swung towards us left-handed! Short of Belton they turned again, and the fox, no more relishing than we did the muddy waters of the brook, ran alongside it. Then they checked, and this time no cast would recover the line. Just enough to take the pull out of the horses, but not enough to make one turn back with January condition under one. The lucky ones, however, got second horses, and the prudent ones dismounted, whilst Launde Park Wood was searched a second time in vain. By the time we got to Prior's Coppice (a beautiful covert if you get away from it), we were sure the morning run had but opened the horses' pipes and done them good (we had also had our lunch and just one small cigar). Hounds came out quickly on their fox, and, I should suppose, tolerably close to him. With a horse not quite fresh it is surely best to catch him by the head and rather to avoid than seek weak places in the fences, and, if you can, to lose as little ground as possible by swerving from the line. The boldest is then the safest course, and those who were close to hounds as they turned after leaving Owston (the village, not the wood) had a nice pull as they rode the inside of the turn. This was just the luck that befalls riders bold and judicious, and enabled us to pull up satisfied and well pleased when, after 40 min., Burrough Wood brought a good run to a close. And so home with a dry jacket for the first time for some weeks.



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ON THE ROAD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Wherever the fox may be found in Mr. Fernie's Thursday country you are certain almost of a riding over a beautiful country; but when the card says Burton Overy, the chances are that the sport will be first-rate. The Quorn generally sends a contingent by train to Kibworth, and on January 19th Lady Curzon, the Duke of Marlborough, and Mrs. W. Lawson were the principal representatives of the parent hunt, while Captain Dawson and Sir Samuel Scott came over the border from the Cottesmore. Mr. Hugh Owen, though he may be said to belong to Melton, seldom misses Mr. Fernie's best meets. Captain Maudslay, who knew of a likely find near his own house at Stackley, and Mrs. Maudslay

were there, and of course such regular attendants as Mr. W. Turlby, Mr. Logan, M.P., the Duchess of Hamilton, Mr. Foster, Lady Theresa Cross, Mr. Roden, Mr. Gordon Cunard, and Lord Churchill. The Stackley fox was at home, and, as the spinnies are but small, had to go at once. He went round the house at Stackley, gaining, I think, a little distance by the manoeuvre, and then crossed over the Burton brook. Heavy ground and big fences prevent men from over-riding hounds in this parish, and thus hounds held on over the park at Ilston, where the white gates swing well, and on as if for Rolleston, where foxes are most welcome and honoured guests. The fox's point, however, was not Rolleston, but swinging to the left, the wide grass fields towards Skeffington stretched out before us.

On a really first-rate scenting day hounds can leave horses at any time over this line, but with a moderate scent it was only at times that the pack ran hard. In the presence of big fences, and with ground as deep as it is now, no one minded the pauses which came from time to time. Tugby was evidently the point of the fox, but it was plain he was going faster than hounds, and eventually got so far ahead as to escape altogether.

The Belvoir at Bitchfield on Friday practically did nothing at all, though there was no scarcity of foxes. A friend writes to me from the Northamptonshire side: "I believe you have no such sport as we enjoyed yesterday (January 19th) from Boughton with Mr. Austen Mackenzie's. Mr. Wroughton and Sir Herbert Langham, present and past Master of the Pytchley, were out. Our hounds draw big coverts wonderfully well, spreading and trying every place. Having killed the first fox, hounds found the second in Geddington Chase, and, driving him out, took a wide ring and back, killing him near the start in an hour and a-half. If you ask me where we went I can't tell you; it took me all my time to keep with hounds, and even then I blessed my stars that I am a light weight and had a blood horse under me. I had three falls on the way, but got up in time to see the end. I don't think more than



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"WE'LL ALL GO A-HUNTING TO-DAY."

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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WHICH WAY HAVE THEY GONE?

"COUNTRY LIFE."

fourteen or fifteen really saw the run, if so many, but the pace was too good to enquire after others. Of course I went home, but they had another run; and the men with second horses, and especially those who did not see the first well, said the second was the faster of the two. But they always do say that if you were not there; however, it was bound to be good, there was such a splendid scent. You ask about our arrangements. I believe we are to be hunted from headquarters, some hounds being kept at Brigstock. Lord Lonsdale would not come back to us."

Of general news, the illness of Mr. Corbet is the burden of my Cheshire friend's letter. From Warwickshire they say Jem Cooper is still laid up; let us hope he will be careful, though rather reckless riding is hereditary in his family, for his late father, when huntsman of the Belvoir, was said to be about the hardest man over Leicestershire of his day. Mr. Austen Mackenzie talks of returning to Scotland, but will surely never be able to keep away from hounds long.

On Friday the Southdown met at Patcham in somewhat stormy weather. The Giles, after some little delay, produced a fox which absolutely refused to leave home for any length of time, and in consequence he fell a victim to the keenness of his pursuers at Coy Down, near Piecombe. We then trotted off to Danny Park, and hounds were soon busily at work in Randolph's Copse. At my station near the road which bisects this covert, I presently heard hounds open with a merry chorus, and soon a dark mangy fox darted across the ride into the opposite wood. From this latter portion of the copse another fox (a bright red one) suddenly appeared, but hearing hounds approaching, he turned tail, and joined his companion. The pack, I think, changed to the second fox, and then swung to the left, and ran through the covert at the back of the house. A right-hand turn took us over the grass of the park, and the pace was excellent for a few minutes, until Hassocks was almost reached, when a slight check occurred. On getting over the London and Brighton road, hounds ran on until the railway line was reached. Just as visions of the Ditchling country were passing before our minds, the fox turned short back, and robbed us of a straight gallop. After some more hunting around Danny, Fred had the satisfaction of handling his quarry.

The accompaniments of Saturday were a strong south-westerly gale, an absence of foxes, and a meet (Hoddern Gate) exposed to the full fury of the elements. The gorse on the cliffs was first of all drawn, but without success. Meanwhile we had an opportunity to observe the heavy sea that was running in the Channel, and the big rollers surging in towards the shore a hundred or more feet below us. At Newhaven the waves were tumbling over the break-water; so you can well imagine, Mr. Editor, that Saturday was no hunting day, and that to be out of doors at all was to suffer no little inconvenience, to say nothing of chasing a fox on such an occasion. Some time elapsed before hounds found, and the gorses near Harvey's Cross and Telscombe were called upon in vain. In the covert to the east of Balsean a fox—some said a brace—was at length got on foot. He ran into the valley near Rodmell, and then turned back. At this juncture my hat went by the board, or, rather, with the hat-guard, which, as a sailor would say, had carried away. It disappeared down a steep hillside, and at first I could see nothing of it. It was rescued, however, by a shepherd boy. I record this incident to show the force of the wind, and also to explain the fact that for some little time I lost sight of hounds. When I again reached them they had just lost their fox on the neighbouring Downs, not far from Harvey's Cross, and at this juncture many turned homewards.

X. & Y.



WHILE in due reverence for Thackeray's express desire no set biography of him will ever be published with the sanction of his relatives, there is no denying the fact that each fresh volume of the invaluable biographical edition under Mrs. Ritchie's supervision adds to our knowledge of the man, and adds to our affect on for his memory. The introduction to "The Virginians," which is the latest born of the volumes to come from the house of Messrs. Smith, Elder, is possessed of special literary interest. Hitherto, the readers have sympathised with Thackeray the man, fighting the hard battle of a literary career, and never too well provided with money, and they have shared the sorrows of Thackeray the husband, compelled to break up his household through the terrible affliction which came upon his wife.

In the introduction to "The Virginians," on the other hand, the carking cares of life are not obtrusively prominent. True it is that now and again a friend, meeting him at the British Museum hard at work upon one of the instalments of "The Virginians," is full of pity for his "hand to mouth" way of living. But, on the whole, by this time he was fairly comfortable in his circumstances. Very cheery are some of the letters from America—for it was during his second visit to the States that "The Virginians" took form in his mind—and very pleasant is it to find him telling his daughters that the dollars roll in, and that they need not stint themselves in dress or equipage. But best of all is it to note the precise care which he spent in preparing himself with that armament of incidental knowledge which was the indispensable preliminary to writing with mastery ease. The little notes, the abundant sketches—the latter faulty, no doubt, sometimes, but full of humour and thought—help one to appreciate and to understand the strength and the polish which were characteristic of his completed work.

Then we have a glimpse of Thackeray as critic of himself; and his attitude towards some of his own books is distinctly amusing, and to a humble admirer of a later day encouraging. For my own part, I have never been able to read the "Book of Snobs" with any satisfaction, or to appreciate some of the rhapsodies that have been written about it. Perhaps, methought, the want of appreciation might be due to the fact that the humour is of a day that is gone, dealing with topics which no longer live. But Mrs. Ritchie lets us learn that the "Book of Snobs" was never much liked by its creator, and that "The Virginians," although it excited a kind of artistic admiration in him, bored him also. Certainly it has not, and never had, the life and strength and vigour of "Esmond," "Pendennis," and "Vanity Fair." That it annoyed the super-sensitive Americans is very plain, but it brought to the author some admirable and very interesting letters from that wonderful man Motley.

One X., an unknown quantity having a habit none the less of coming down like a hundred of bricks upon the pretentious, published in the *Saturday Review* last year a number of articles scolding those numerous persons who had, in the opinion of X., assumed arms without due warrant. The articles are shortly to be published in book form by Mr. Elliott Stock, and will, no doubt, command a considerable sale. "Never, by any chance, say anything good-natured about anybody," was the advice given many years ago to a journalistic aspirant by the astute editor of a Society paper. Ill-nature, especially when it is applied to rather a flagrant form of folly, finds a ready market. All the same, even the pretentious are our fellow-creatures, and their little blunders are to be pitied rather than despised. Figgs, the ex-grocer and millionaire, may have no claim to wear arms. But he has coachmen, grooms, and footmen, and custom ordains that they should have something in the way of a device on their livery buttons. Figgs, good easy man, does not care a straw what design is chosen by Mrs. Figgs for his crest, or totem. Whatsoever she chooses must be wrong. However, the button-makers have found a way of placing good Figgs beyond the reach of the artillery of X. They have invented a button bearing an intricate but meaningless design, which looks just as well as eagle, lion, or griffin. They call it the "Subterfuge," and an uncommonly good idea it is.

There is nothing like being topical in literature. "The plot turns on Ritualism"—such is the brief announcement of the character of a novel to be issued shortly by Mr. John Long. The author is not, as might have been expected, Sir William Harcourt, but Mr. Gibbon Berkley.

As a collector of interesting gossip concerning the history of books ancient and modern, Mr. Edmund Gosse has few rivals, and the last little contribution he has made to the *North American Review* is emphatically interesting. "Treasure Island" appeared originally in a boys' paper as a serial, and the boys didn't like it at all. Nothing but the stern and binding phraseology of the contract prevented the editor from cutting the story off in the middle. That is odd, for the special merit of "Treasure Island" has always seemed to me to be that it was the best boys' story ever written.

Books to order from the library:—
 "Ruskin, Rossetti, Pre-Raphaelitism." W. M. Rossetti. (George Allen.)
 "Infatuation." B. M. Croker. (Chatto and Windus.)
 "The Two Standards." W. Barry.
 "Memoirs and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier." J. A. Doyle. (Murray.)
 "Sketches from Memory." G. A. Storey. (Chatto and Windus.)

LOOKER-ON.



TREATMENT OF SWEET PEAS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I had a good deal of trouble with my sweet peas last year. The mice ate them, or they did not germinate properly. I treated them fairly in accordance with the advice of the gardening papers and of my friends, and the soil was favourable. I should be so much obliged if you could give me some advice about them in your valuable paper.—ZENOBIA.

[If "Zenobia" followed all the advice of the gardening papers, it seems a little hard on us to ask us to better it. It is evident, however, that the peas will not grow if mice eat them. We should recommend "Zenobia" to catch the mice, or to cover the peas with red lead before sowing, which will keep the mice away and do no harm to the plants. A soaking, before sowing, in milk and water helps the peas to germinate.—EE.]

LEARNING TO SHOOT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It always seems to me such a pity that young shots, when first a gun is placed in their hands, are not given some rather more definite instructions, that I hope you will not mind printing a line on the subject. I do not mean that they are not taught to be careful of their guns, not to point them at people and so on, but that they are seldom given any really useful hints about how to kill the game—how to aim. They are sometimes told to shoot well ahead, but that is about the sum total of the instruction given. They are not told how they are to arrive at that consummation of "holding well ahead." Now it seems to me that they might be very much helped to this desirable end if they were to be told to throw the gun up on the object and then to swing it a foot, a yard (or so on, according to the distance and pace and direction of the moving object), so as to make the shot meet it and strike it in the vital part. I do not, of course, pretend to be enunciating any very new or original ideas in this; only it seems to me such a pity that these well-known theories should not be put before young shooters more prominently. I have read the Badminton book on shooting, but it seems to me that instructions as to aiming, though nominally given, are in effect conspicuous by their absence. I daresay I am only a busybody in writing like this; but it is a subject on which I have always felt rather strongly, and I think a word in your influential paper might have a very good effect. We see so many young shots tailoring their pheasants time after time, and yet no one seems able to put the trouble right for them. There is only a repetition of the old drone, "hold well ahead," without indication of the manner in which the holding ahead is to be achieved.—SAGITTARIUS.

THE VALUE OF SNOW.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In this county—that is to say in Kent—we have been suffering, as many others have suffered, from lack of water. Recent heavy rains have filled our surface springs, but have not moved the deep-level springs that are the sources of the supply of our wells. Now everyone tells me that we shall not make up the deficiency in our rain supply unless we get plenty of snow this winter. I cannot see why that should be. They tell me that snow goes gradually percolating down, but that rain runs off and does not soak through. But it appears to me that more water goes to waste in a thaw than at any other time. The snow melts, and every furrow is full of the water rushing away. There is not much of the slow percolation or soaking in about it then. I should like to

know what you think on this point, for in your columns I have seen snow spoken of in the terms that people use of it here. But I cannot see why it is more useful than rain, even if as useful. Could you explain for me?—AGNETA.

[We cannot refuse to attempt an explanation. Snow, it is true, in a very quick thaw does melt and run away, and is as much of a "fill-dyke" as any other form of moisture; but this violent and quick thawing is exceptional, rather than normal. If our correspondent will consider the normal behaviour of snow she will find, we think, that its manner, in this climate, is to lie about for a week or so, very frequently melting a little during the heat of the day and ceasing to melt in the night. It is in this way, by the gradual partial melting, not by the sudden and violent thaw, that the percolation and soaking spoken of are brought about. This, we take it, is the special use of snow, in filling the deep springs in a flat country. In hilly countries its service is a little different. Generally, there, the tops of the hills have snow on them in winter, and as the season advances the snow melts higher and higher until all is gone—again a gradual process of slow replenishment. Our correspondent, we fancy, has fallen into the error of regarding the melting of the snow as a more sudden thing than it commonly is.—ED.]

FRIENDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending enclosed photograph, hoping (though it is a bad photograph) that you can make a picture of it to insert in your paper.



The photograph comes from Bechuanaland, South Africa, where I am living. It is a dyka, a small kind of deer, and I thought it made a pretty picture to see such friendship between a wild deer and a kitten. The dyka was brought to me at about four days old, and has been brought up on the bottle with milk and corn-flour. He is as tame as a dog, and follows me everywhere, and sits in the house with the dogs and cat, which, when you consider that he comes of quite a wild breed, whose parents and forefathers could never have set eyes on a white man (for we are right in the wilds, over 100 miles

from any white people), I think is rather wonderful. He has no restraint whatever, but runs about the veldt at his own sweet will. He bounds and gallops like a mad thing, but never by any chance gets out of sight of the house. He is six months old now, and eats green food, but still keeps on with the bottle, though he is already sprouting horns. I was told that he would be sure to go blind, as dykas in captivity always do so; but, owing to his life of utter freedom and liberty, he is in the very best of health. Hoping you can make some use of this for your paper (which I read out here with the greatest interest).—AGNES H. S. HARRISON.

WEIGHT OF WILD RABBITS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I send the weights of ten rabbits, killed on high-lying land in Westmoreland, on December 29th, 1898. These were not picked in any way, so may be taken as a fair average sample: 3lb. 1½oz., 3lb. 2½oz., 3lb. 3oz., 3lb. 3oz., 3lb. 4½oz., 3lb. 5oz., 3lb. 5½oz., 3lb. 6½oz., 3lb. 10oz., 4lb. It will be seen that the lightest is 3lb. 1½oz., the heaviest 4lb., giving an average of 3lb. 5½oz. A long period of exceptionally wet weather preceded the date mentioned; had the weather been dry and seasonable the weight would probably have been heavier. It fell to my lot to "review" the latest volume of the "Fur and Feather" Series, "The Rabbit" (Longmans, Green, and Co.), and I imagined that the weights of wild rabbits given there were too great. The above weights, however, substantially confirm Mr. J. E. Harting's figures.—JOHN WATSON, Thorny Hills, Kendal.

MOORHENS IN PHEASANT COVERTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think it must have been in your excellent paper that I have lately seen some letters discussing the harm that moorhens do in coverts. I am sure they do harm. They eat an enormous quantity of pheasants' food if it happens to be put down near their haunts. I do not agree with what one of your correspondents says—that they will drive the pheasants away from the food. The pheasant can take care of himself in the presence of any moorhen, but that they eat lots of the food there can be no doubt. It is not merely to say this that I am bothering you with this letter, but to suggest something in the way of a "biter-bit" policy. For years we have been in the habit of killing our moorhens—shooting them when we beat the coverts for pheasants—and it is wonderful how easily they can be missed, perhaps, because they fly so slowly, like landrails. But it is only lately that it has occurred to us to eat them. Hitherto we have left them, and I do not believe even the beaters have eaten them. But we have tried them in a pie and found them excellent, not at all fishy in taste, but very like young rook pie. I may say, too, that the eggs are very good eating. This, however, has been well known for a long time. Few, though, I think, have had the courage to eat the bird—he should be skinned, not plucked.—P. V. L.

MOTTOES FOR SUNDIALS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Perhaps the enclosed motto will meet with Madame Ligonier's fancy. It has the demerit, however, of being original: "I'll mark the time while light around me dances."—COLONIST (Cape Colony).

SIR,—Seeing some letters in your pleasant paper on the subject of sundial mottoes, yet seeing none quoting one that is very familiar to me in an old Kentish garden, will you permit me to quote it here: "Νύξ γὰρ ἐρχεται," being, of course, a part of the Divine monition to occupy the time, "for the night cometh," when no man may work. Thus it belongs to that large genus of the sundial motto family that inculcates diligence, but it is seldom that the motto-mongers trust themselves to the Greek character, though Latin mottoes are perhaps more frequent than any others. On the same occasion may I be allowed to repeat to you a verse or two pendant over the bar of a small inn in this county also. May be they are not new, though new to me; but you, Sir, and your readers may find them, I think, quaintly interesting. The one on the right hand is styled the "Landlord's Address," and is as follows:

"My liquor's good, my measure's just,
My profit's small, I cannot trust.
I've trusted many, to my sorrow,
So pay to-day, and trust to-morrow.

"All you who stand before the fire,
I pray, sit down—'tis my desire
That other folks as well as you
May see the fire, and feel it too.

"And when a traveller comes in,
Weary and wet unto the skin,
Your friendly hearts, I pray, divide,
And place him by the fireside."

All this, I venture to think, is admirable inn-keeper's morality, and would much have pleased Chaucer. On the opposite side of the bar is a legend scarcely less admirable, which is aptly headed "Good Advice," and runs thus:—

"Call frequently, Drink moderately.
Pay honourably, Be good company.
Part friendly, Go home quietly,
And sleep soundly."

I trust that these trifles may be acceptable to you.—MAIDSTONE.

ARUM LILY AND AMERICAN MAY-FLOWER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On the 24th of December I took up to our church an arum lily in a pot which had one bud half opened; this plant was left in the church until the 16th of January. The bloom is now in the house and not in the leaf faded (January 20th). I have never known a like instance of floral longevity. Is it not very unusual? The plant has never been forced in any way. Surely there is no plant so well adapted for church decoration. Can anyone tell me where to procure seeds or plants of *Epigaea Repens* (the American May-flower)? It takes, so far as anything else can take, the place of the primrose with American children, who go a-maying for it every spring. Would it not be interesting to try to naturalise it?—T. CONSTABLE.

[We quite agree with you regarding the arum lily. No finer plant for bold decorations exists, certainly not for church adornment, as the ivory-white spathes are strikingly effective. The reason why the spathes have remained fresh so long is because the plant has not been forced. All things pushed on in a high temperature have a short life, and that is why purchased plants too often have a brief existence when taken into houses or rooms of a lower temperature from the place they were taken from. The *Epigaea* might well be naturalised in shady spots, and as you have had some difficulty in obtaining it we advise you to apply to Messrs. Barr and Son, King Street, Covent Garden, London, as they are likely to possess a stock.—ED.]

Photographic Competition.

THE conductors of COUNTRY LIFE, being in a position of great advantage for the appreciation of the merits of amateur artists in photography, have determined to do all that lies in their power to encourage the efforts of amateurs.

They therefore offer a prize of £5 for the best set of photographs illustrative of wintry scenes at or about an old country house. The photographs should be silver prints, preferably on printing-out paper, and not less than six in number, and must reach the offices of the paper on or before the 31st day of March, 1899. They must be carefully packed, and addressed to the Editor in a parcel marked clearly on the outside with the words "COUNTRY LIFE Photographic Competition." Each individual photograph must also, for purposes of identification, be marked with the name and address of the competitor.

The decision of the Editor in allotting the prize will be final and without appeal; and the Editor desires it to be known that in arriving at his decision he will take into particular consideration the important matter of choice of subject. Snow scenes and hoar frost effects offer, in his opinion, great opportunities, and when episodes in the life of bird or beast can be introduced, the pictures will certainly be regarded with a favourable eye.

The judgment of the Editor will be pronounced in the month of April, and the right of publishing reproductions of the winning pictures will be reserved. Apart from the prize-winning photographs, it is understood the Editor has the right to publish any photographs sent in on payment of 10s. 6d. for each one used.